

CONTENTS.

OCTOBER—DECEMBER, 1948

	PAGE
OTWAY CUFFE. By HUBERT BUTLER	1
REASON AND MYSTICISM. By ARLAND USSHER	16
GOING FOUR-FOOTED. By ANTHONY RYE	19
ART AND MYSTERY OF HAND PRINTING. By JAMES GUTHRIE	26
THE GEORGIAN OBSERVATORY. By TEMPLE LANE	29
CROW GROVE. By MARY CALLINAGH	29
THE BOG FAIRY TELLS ABOUT STAR PEOPLE. By MAIRIN CREGAN	30
"THE POET'S VIRGINITY." By Y. L.	39
DRAMATIC COMMENTARY. By A. J. LEVENTHAL	48
ART NOTES. By EDWARD SHEEHY	51
BOOK REVIEWS	53
LETTER TO EDITOR	80

The Editor of THE DUBLIN MAGAZINE will be glad to consider MSS. offered for publication, but no MS. will be returned unless it is accompanied by a stamped and addressed envelope, and the Editor will take no responsibility for manuscripts that may be lost.

Letters should be addressed to 2 Crow Street, DUBLIN, and communications with regard to advertisements, subscriptions, etc., should be sent to the Manager of "The Dublin Magazine" at that address.

Price 2s. 6d.

Annual Subscription 10s. 6d. post free.

LONDON AGENT :

MESSRS. JOHN & EDWARD BUMPUS, LTD., 477 OXFORD STREET, W.I.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2024

THE DUBLIN MAGAZINE

VOL. XXIII.—No. 4.
(New Series)

OCTOBER—DECEMBER, 1948.

Price 2/6

OTWAY CUFFE

By Hubert Butler

MANY Irish historians, who do not like political nationalism, Dr. Binchy, for example, trace its growth in Ireland to the contagion of the Anglo-Irish. They contrast the noisy and narrow provincialism of the colonist with the broad universalism, which should be congenital in the Catholic Irish native. The paradox is arresting but unfair. It is true that the Anglo-Irish have played a part out of all proportion to their numbers in shaping the idea of an Irish nation, but, within their own group, they have been, except for two decades under Grattan, a tiny, despised and neglected minority, and, when self-government came, they were very quickly pushed on one side. If there are provincial and demagogic traits in the Irish state to-day, displeasing to the Catholic historian, it is not just to blame the Anglo-Irish nationalist.

It is difficult to think of anyone less of a provincial or a demagogue than Otway Cuffe, the younger brother of the Earl of Desart, who for a dozen years was the exponent of Irish nationalism in Kilkenny, and yet he seems to me to be typical of many Anglo-Irish nationalists of a generation ago. He was no politician and scarcely ever appeared on a public platform. He never said or did the kind of things that attract attention and headlines. He took so little trouble about publicity for himself or his work, that it is only by searching through the local newspapers that it is possible to glean a few facts about his life. Yet it was realised on his death in 1912 that a notable Irishman had died, whose failure to make a permanent mark on his country was Ireland's failure and tragedy as well as his own.

Most of those who knew him intimately are now dead and almost nothing has been printed about his private life outside the memoirs of his niece, Lady Sybil Lubbock. She writes well enough and was fond of her uncle, but everything he thought and did was a mystery to her and it is plain that the rest of his family found all his activities equally mystifying and embarrassing. Behind all her praise a single refrain is audible, Why, with his gifts and advantages, did he choose to sacrifice himself for people, who would only exploit him and ridicule him behind his back?

When Cuffe came back to Ireland about 50 years ago, there was probably a greater gulf of sympathy and experience between the various Irish groups than had ever existed before. The successors of Grattan and Flood had become completely anglicised and neither hoped nor wished for a recovery of influence in their own country except as representatives of England. Anyone, who tried to bridge the gulf, did so at his peril. Lady Sybil's father, Lord Desart, kept to the safer bank, not without regrets. It is curious how ignorant they had become of the land in which they had grown to consequence. Lady Sybil believed that Kilkenny was on the Suire (sic), repeating this mistake in two books. Her father was a distinguished lawyer, her mother was related closely to the English royal family and their attitude to their Callan neighbours was benevolent and correct but very cautious. They seem to have lived at Desart Court the life not merely of a garrison, but of a beleaguered garrison. Finding the local tradesmen unreliable, they were in the habit of getting their groceries by hamper from London. They did not believe in spreading frivolous ideas among the labouring classes, and Lady Desart was seriously annoyed when a neighbour offered a prize for country dancing in Desart village school. "A course in cleanliness and practical housewifery would be more to the point," she said. When her brother-in-law, Otway, said that what the Irish country people needed was "poetry, poetry and music," she retorted, "In my opinion what the villagers need most are buttons and teeth!"

This was Cuffe's family background and against it it is easy for Lady Sybil to represent him, in an affectionate but purblind way, as a versatile but unrealistic person, who pandered to the whims of the disaffected. She relates how embarrassing they found Otway's "peasant arts and crafts, his folk-lore and his classes in the Irish language." Lord Desart considered that these things, "though innocuous in themselves were in Ireland inevitably

flavoured with political and nationalist controversy and therefore to be eschewed." "Of course," he said with mild amusement, "the Kilkenny County Council may be genuinely interested in his fairy tales and theosophy and admirable book-binding but I should hardly have expected it." He was particularly hostile to the new interest in Irish legend and folk-lore, which Standish O'Grady, the editor of "The Kilkenny Moderator" had aroused in Ireland. "All country folk," he said, "tell the same tales and a backward people like the Irish keep theirs longest. There is nothing wonderful in that. The harm begins, when men like Yeats come and make solemn pilgrimages to see the fairies for themselves and then write seriously about them and encourage all the world to think that ignorance and superstition are better than reason and common sense. Of course, there is charm in these fancies but there is cruelty too and there is a danger in any denial of reason."

His challenge to the fairies is hard to answer. A few years before on the slopes of Slievenaman, which he could see from Desart, a young woman had been roasted to death on the kitchen fire by her adoring husband and family. She had been ill and they believed that a changeling had entered her body. If they drove it out, the real wife would return. She would come back riding on a grey horse from out of Kilgranagh rath near-by, happy and restored to health.

Yet Lord Desart would have been more convincing if he had been less complacent and detached. To O'Grady and to Cuffe it seemed that the Irish landlords were themselves becoming as obsolete as the fairies, objects of superstitious veneration to many but seldom seen and of no practical use. Their criticisms could only be of value if they were ready to receive them too, but they were not.

I have quoted Lord Desart, an astute man, eminent in his profession, to show what a lonely furrow an Anglo-Irish nationalist had to plough, and how easily what he did could be misinterpreted and ridiculed even by those who were fond of him. It is strange to find that W. B. Yeats and Desart both later became senators, but unquestionably it was Yeats, the student of theosophy and the fairies, and not Desart, the lawyer, who played the greater part in the senate and proved the more staunch and formidable champion of Anglo-Irish culture.

Otway Cuffe had led an adventurous life. He had worked on the railways in America, had learnt bull-fighting in Spain, wood-carving and book-binding in Italy. From India he had acquired an interest in Indian thought which his relations dubbed theosophy, and on a visit to Ireland he had met William Morris and been captivated by his social philosophy. But the serious occupations for an Irish gentleman were still hunting, shooting and fishing and Cuffe's mild, extraneous enthusiasms were regarded as evidence of affectation and frivolity. I suppose that his neighbours sensed in his enthusiasm an implied criticism of their own apathy and protected themselves by representing him as a harmless eccentric. In fact he was an able and diplomatic member of committees and councils and he certainly never teased the Kilkenny County Council with book-binding or theosophy.

I have told elsewhere how Cuffe and his other sister-in-law, Ellen Lady Desart, supported Standish O'Grady in his war upon Lord Ormonde and the local potentates of Kilkenny. Soon after that Cuffe became an alderman and then mayor of Kilkenny.

His ancestors had frequently been mayors of Kilkenny but, at the beginning of the 20th century, it was so strange for a Cuffe to wish to be on the Kilkenny corporation as to be sinister. At his first meeting a polite alderman drew attention to the part his great grandfather had once played in Kilkenny municipal affairs. This seemed sycophantic to another alderman who shouted out: "Don't go on about his great-grandfather or I'll put you out on your head!" In fact Cuffe played his part by effacing not only his great grandfather but himself as well, using his great influence and intelligence indirectly and through others, avoiding always the impression that he was pushing himself forward or trying to recover for his class an influence which they had lost.

King Edward VII had lately visited Ireland and had stayed at Kilkenny Castle. The town had been sumptuously decorated by Messrs. Womersley of Leeds. If you leant over John's bridge and watched the gas-jets reflected in the placid Nore from Messrs' Womersley's Venetian Masts, you could easily, it was said, fancy yourself upon the Rialto. Because it was Ireland there were banners with "God bless our Sporting Monarch!" on them as well as Union Jacks and shamrocks and harps and triumphal arches. One reporter noted that on the gorgeous banners which spanned the streets, "Kilkenny" stood out fresh and clear, while

"Welcome to" was rather faint. Messrs. Womersley, like the King, had done this sort of thing hundreds of times before and could produce an overwhelming effect on the inexperienced townsfolk with a wise economy of effort.

The King had been genial, the Queen beautiful. Reluctantly, perhaps regrettably, all had enjoyed themselves and the psychological reaction, when it came, was more than usually complex and inarticulate. In hundreds of Rural District Councils there were neurotic scenes, which even the local reporters were unable to represent as debates. Thus at Callan, near Desart, the Board of Guardians passed a vote of condemnation on itself for passing a vote of condemnation on the Waterford Corporation for presenting an address to King Edward. One of the Board boasted that, in Kilmoganny, he had himself prevented Earl Spencer, the Lord Lieutenant, from being cheered, but now, he added, he would have led the cheers. An opposition member cried out; "Was that the time they had the streets of Kilmoganny covered with beer and porter?"

"No, no! He came as an accidental gentleman hunting with his red coat on his back."

"You'll get people to sell their bodies and souls for beer anywhere and in Kilmoganny too."

"I saw no beer."

The Callan Board of Guardians got itself ultimately into such a hysterical state about these matters as to attract the attention of "The World Animated Picture Company," which was looking for material for a high-spirited Irish farce. It claimed to be the World's First Fireproof Model and it was drawing huge crowds to Kilkenny by its pictures of the Gordon Bennet Race and the King's Visit. It had settled for a moment on the young theatre, which Cuffe had recently created, like a beautiful freshly hatched butterfly laying its eggs wherever it saw new growth. In a few years its progeny would take over Cuffe's theatre, and every other theatre and devastate the independent drama in every Irish provincial town.

At the next meeting of the Callan Board of Guardians the chairman read out a letter from the Company asking permission to take their picture in action, "if possible, wearing any local or characteristic costumes they may adopt when attending meetings. We are prepared to pay them each £5 and guarantee a royalty of 15% on gross receipts of pictures."

Cuffe had been equerry to the King but his views do not seem to be those of a monarchist. He appears to have taken no part in these embarrassing festivities or in the remorse that followed on them. He tried always as far as possible to be an "accidental gentleman" but this was not always easy for one who had been an officer in the British Army. The Kilkenny Corporation, like the Callan Guardians, spent much time passing passionate resolutions of congratulation or condemnation on other people's behaviour. I cannot agree that these were as petty and ridiculous as they read now in retrospect, though undoubtedly they consumed energy and enthusiasm that could have been spent on the wise conduct of local affairs. There were then very few sensational injustices in the relations of England and Ireland but the old hatred, which in a few years was to burst out in rebellion and civil war, was kept alive by small sneers and sophistries, by unimaginative civil-servants and pointless insults to Irish pride.

Whatever Cuffe did or said was bound to be found wrong by someone and his Kilkenny activities were watched suspiciously by the Dublin press. In one week he was attacked violently both by the Unionist *Evening Mail* and by the Nationalist *United Irishman*. There was the affair of G. R. Symes' play, "The Dandy Fifth" and that of the Gortnahoe District Council's notepaper. There had been rowdy demonstrations against the play, because it was thought to contain sneers against the Irish nation and propaganda for the British Army. Kilkenny Corporation passed a vote of congratulation for the demonstrators, and Cuffe, who had not voted, was reproved sternly by the *Evening Mail*, because, "though holding the King's Commission, he had allowed these insults to the Army and its Uniform to be uttered."

As for the Gortnahoe District Council it had, in the interests of economy, used O.H.M.S. notepaper and been censured by the Kilkenny Gaelic League. Cuffe, who maintained that "loyalty" was compatible with an Irish Ireland, threatened to resign from the Gaelic League and for this threat he was severely censured in his turn by the *United Irishman*. Was he right or wrong? I do not know, but at least he took the problem seriously.

A generation ago these squabbles seemed even more futile than they do to-day. Yet the problems of the Gortnahoe District Council were real ones and Cuffe was right not to scorn them. Multiplied a millionfold and debated with armies and atom-bombs, rather than with simple acrimony, they have become the insoluble

enigmas of modern Europe. O'Grady and Cuffe were probably wise in thinking that, in a political problem as in an equation, the solution will come most easily when the numbers on both sides are reduced to their smallest. They believed in the small community, even when it disappointed them.

Cuffe went ahead in his own way. He brought down Douglas Hyde, who was met by a drum and fife band and who spoke to the Kilkenny branch of the Gaelic League of which Cuffe was the president and moving spirit. Hyde told them that no act of parliament could recover their nationality. He said that with her shilling shockers England was pelting them with the mud of her streets. "If we do not work on Irish lines, we shall become the Japanese of western Europe, capable only of imitation and lost to native initiative." He told them that they were all of them deeply conscious of their inadequacy. "If we take hold of that feeling and elevate it, we shall increase our sense of self-respect, of individuality and honour, and that is what the Gaelic League wants to do."

"The more divergence of thought, of characteristics, habits and customs that obtain in the commonwealth, the better for the races. Ours is the least reading and most unlettered of peoples. Our art is distinguished above all others by its hideousness."

In all this he showed how very little there was in the early Gaelic League of that spirit of complacency, arrogance and provincialism, which invaded it later.

Standish O'Grady had believed that, if there was a trained volunteer force, like Charlemont's volunteers, the British garrison could withdraw and leave Ireland to defend itself. Cuffe drilled a Kilkenny brigade and started a gymnasium and a club. To advertise and pay for his schemes there were frequent concerts at which Irish songs and dances alternated with gymnastic displays. They were ecstatically praised in the local press. "Mr. Mullaly," we read, "brought down the house with his Indian clubs." Cuffe himself recited Thomas Davis's poem 'Owen Roe O'Neill.' "The fine stately figure of this noble and true Irishman, attired in Irish dress, pouring forth his feelings over such a leader and chieftain as Owen Roe O'Neill was decidedly an unusual sight." Many jeered at the obvious incongruities and he was suspected of exhibitionism, whereas he was really making his protest against banality. His enterprises were found irresistibly ludicrous by people who see nothing funny in the long patient queues that to-

day wind down the streets of our provincial towns to see some travesty of Irish history concocted in Hollywood or Elstree.

One of Cuffe's enterprises that is still remembered is the Sheestown play. O'Grady never tired of saying that it was only by the friendly alliance of north and south that Ireland could become a vigorous and civilised land. He was a southerner and yet he believed that all the great and significant movements in Irish history from the time of Cuchullain and Owen Roe O'Neill to the '98 had drawn strength and inspiration from the north. The visit of the Cave Hill players from Belfast to Kilkenny, on Cuffe's invitation, was a symbol of this belief. They acted a play of O'Grady's on Red Hugh O'Donnell at Sheestown, Cuffe's home on the banks of the Nore. O'Grady had long left *The Kilkenny Moderator* and all Cuffe's activities are recorded only in the shoddiest provincial journalism, but, through all the clichés, it is possible to see that he stirred men's minds in a way they had not been stirred before. The Belfast men camped upon the banks of the Nore and their huge bonfires lit the woods upon the opposite shore, where Chinese lanterns hung from the trees and pipers played as they marched. The harvest moon cast an enchanted light on the green lawn where the play was acted. "It recalled," said one reporter, trying to do justice to the beauty of the scene, "one of the most graphic chapters of Marie Corelli's great works."

It was a triumph of friendliness and imagination. The play itself was of a rather simple kind and it would be unkind to criticise it too severely. Its purpose was explained in the prologue, of which one verse runs:

Brave, proud Ultonia hither sends to-day
Her gallant children here to act her play.
In gentle bonds they would unite once more
Ulster and Leinster, Lagan and the Nore.

Some two thousand spectators streamed out from Kilkenny and down the long winding avenue to the river. It was a success, and the sceptics had to console themselves with the thought that a number of tea-cups were stolen and exotic shrubs pulled up by the roots. Those who know Ireland will not be surprised that the shrubs and cups were forgotten quickly by their owners but mourned with Schadenfreude by the sceptics for years after the harvest moon and the pipers marching through the lantern-lit woods and the courage and imagination of the Cuffes had been forgotten by all but a few.

In all this he had the support of Ellen, Lady Desart, his eldest brother's widow. She too joined the Gaelic League and told them that her own people, the Jews, had kept their language, Hebrew, alive, as a bond of union between them. With her vast wealth, she helped him to start the Kilkenny Woodworkers, the Woollen Mills, a tobacco farm, a model village and hospital, a recreation hall, a public library, a theatre. There was no cultural or social activity in Kilkenny, which they did not support.

It is fashionable now to deride "uplift" and to suspect the wealthy or independent of being patronising when they aim at a more equal distribution of privilege and education, or to pity their innocence in being exploited. In fact, it was no naïve optimism that urged Cuffe on. He knew that the pleasant, not uncivilised life, to which he had been born, rested on unstable foundations. A great effort of renunciation and adaptation would have to be made, if even a remnant of the old traditions was to survive. O'Grady had written of the Irish gentry: "Ireland and her destinies hang upon you, literally so. Either you will refashion her, moulding us anew after some human and heroic pattern or we plunge downwards into roaring revolutionary anarchies, where no road or path is any longer visible at all." Cuffe may have had some premonition of the smoking walls of Desart, of the tragic exile of his brother and the final negation of that influence which the Anglo-Irish still enjoyed. The need for haste perhaps stimulated them to more ventures than they could reasonably control and very soon there were bruising disappointments.

You can reconstruct what happened from paragraphs in the Kilkenny press. Under the dust and the cheap varnish, you can see the fine grain of the wood, the careful, fastidious workmanship.

In June, 1907, the model village of Talbot's Inch was being built and Ellen Lady Desart's own house, in which all the furniture, except the grandfather clock, had been made by the Kilkenny Woodworkers, was ready. One evening, in the words of a reporter, "she entered into possession of her picturesque bijou residence" and the Corporation met her with swords and mace-bearers on the road from Sheestown. The fire-brigade was there and pipers' bands and an address saw read by the Mayor and the Town Clerk.

Lady Desart said to them: "I dream of Talbot's Inch becoming the rallying point for all Kilkenny, not only of industry (which I may surely say it has already become with our woodworkers and our tobacco and the woollen mills over the river,

which we have linked to us with our little golden bridge), but for all also that makes for joy and harmony and the higher pleasures that refine the mind and elevate the spirit and the soul.

Give me the great happiness to know before I die that the name I bear, which is unspeakably dear to me, will go down to your children and your children's children, enshrined in your hearts as one, who loved you and deserved your love."

Otway Cuffe seldom made speeches. He had none of Ellen Desart's warm Jewish readiness of tongue, her quick facility to interpret a mood and to strive to make it enduring with words and money. I can only find one of his speeches. It is, characteristically, to the Kilkenny Y.M.C.A. and about the four orders of the Brahmins. He contrasted their organisation with that of the ancient Irish society, a system that was patriarchal, regional communal and yet aristocratic, where the individual personality counted and men felt a responsibility for each other's defence, a small and savage society, which yet contained in itself the germ of a society happier than our own. He said that the trouble in the world began with talk of our duty to our neighbour. Our neighbour is a part of ourselves and to help him should be not a duty but a love. As for himself, if he devoted all his thoughts and hopes to his near surroundings, the field would still be far larger than he could ever cover. Yet he could do more for his country, if he kept to this field than if he tried to spread himself over the universe. The Christian young men were flattered and interested, there was a grateful, flurried reply, before they passed on to subjects that were familiar to them, the "Catch-my-pal Temperance Club" and the question 'Is extempore prayer a dead-letter?' Cuffe was content to cast his ideas on the most unlikely soil, hoping that here and there a seed might one day germinate. Lady Desart's more commonplace emotionalism, her enthusiasms which were easier to understand, floated his ideas into regions, which they would otherwise not have reached. The love she felt for her neighbourhood and its people she had derived from the Cuffes, but she expressed it with a robust sentimentality from which they would have recoiled. When she was given the freedom of the city, she said, "I lost my heart to Kilkenny that May morning six and twenty years ago, when it opened its arms to me, a young and happy bride. My husband taught me to love every inch of Kilkenny and every living being within the four corners of this fair county. It is a real solace to me

in these days of my widowhood to see that my love, which has deepened with the years, is so overwhelmingly returned. I cannot say thank you for such love. I can only cling to it and appreciate it. I can only hope it will live on and increase and give Kilkenny in the giving something approaching the happiness it has given and gives me to receive it."

Quite soon things began to go wrong. In the Kilkenny Woodworkers they needed a cabinet-maker and Cuffe after long advertisement had to accept a non-Trade Union worker from Glasgow. Thereupon 18 men out of 100 went on strike. The Glasgow man was a Jew and this incensed the strikers still more. They struck him and chanted in chorus, "Clear out, Ikie!"

None of the strikers, the Kilkenny papers defiantly declared, were Kilkennymen and they underlined the mean ingratitude to Cuffe and Ellen Desart, the Jewess, who had poured money into the Kilkenny industries, regardless of profit. The English Trade Union Officials backed up the strikers. There came a sharp letter from Alex. Gossip, Gen. Sec. National Amalgamated Furnishing Trades Assn. of Finsbury Pavement. He said he was 'not prepared to tolerate unnecessary grievances of kind indicated.' He trusted that Cuffe would at once see that end was put to same. Representatives were sent to Kilkenny but Cuffe refused to see them, and answered all their letters with haughtiness. The interference from England, the flare-up of anti-semitism and the threat to that community, which Cuffe was trying to build up, not upon impersonal officialism and scheduled rights, but on personal relations, all this cut him to the quick. He refused all mediation and started to replace the strikers with men from outside. He knew they might be stopped by picketers at Kilkenny station, so he had them met at the station before it, Gowran. One morning a little man called Flanagan got out of the train at Gowran with his trunk and found the draughtsman there with a jennet trap. They set off together, when suddenly a side-car loaded with strikers lurched down on them. "That's your game, is it?" they screamed, "Get out, you white-livered little scamp!" "I'm only doing my duty," said little Flanagan, but he was dragged out of the trap and the box flung on the road. Finally box and Flanagan were hoisted onto the side-car and cantered off to Kilkenny. A procession of tradesmen and a piper met them in John Street and with the piper playing a victory march and the tradesmen cheering, they drove their bewildered captive and his trunk through the town. It was a great triumph for democracy.

There were several of these triumphs ; there was a mysterious fire at the Woodworkers, the origins of which were never cleared up, and finally there was a series of embezzlements on the part of trusted officials. The blame for most of these things rested with outsiders, and Kilkenny people remained strong partisans of Cuffe and Ellen Desart and never for a moment suspected the purity of their motives. Lady Desart refused to prosecute or to be discouraged. But after a time the factory had to close its doors.

Bad news also came from the Woollen Mills. At a meeting of the shareholders in 1911 they were told : " After a few years working the greater part of the original capital has been hopelessly lost." But Lady Desart herself came to the rescue with £10,000. To-day the Woollen Mills is one of the very few of their enterprises to survive.

The strikes cannot be blamed on Cuffe. They were the result of a collision between the routine politics of the Big World with its ready-made strategy and slogans and the supple personal politics of the small community. As for the repeated evaporation of capital, explanations were not easy. Idealists, especially wealthy ones, are supposed to be easy to deceive, and perhaps Cuffe and Lady Desart were too trusting, but they had seen the defeat of Standish O'Grady and must have known disillusionment long before. Possibly they were too arrogant in their refusal to take advice. They were trying to turn the dragon of industrialism into a harmless domestic animal, but by the beginning of the century almost everyone was directly or indirectly in the pay of the dragon. The Cuffes were obliged to depend on experts, thick-witted, lopsided men, who observed only that their employers lacked all interest in personal profit and decided that this deficiency must be due simply to wealth and inattention. They also noticed that the Cuffes were humane people. Delinquents expected and received indulgence.

Cuffe was not a young man. These disappointments wounded him deeply. They undermined his health and clouded his mind. He was advised to go for a long sea voyage. In January, 1912, the news came that he had died at Freemantle in Western Australia and been carried to his grave by Kilkenny men, members of the Perth hurling club.

Obituary notices in the local press are a bye-word for maudlin insincerity, but on Cuffe's death the sense of bewilderment and loss, which was recorded, was unfeigned and not exaggerated. There were endless deputations, adjournments, condolences.

"The day was in mourning for the loss of Kilkenny's great benefactor. Heavy clouds rolled across a leaden sky from early morning and the surrounding hills were enveloped in mist. In the city all the shops were closed and the flag on the Tholsel was at half-mast . . .

"A man of noble soul, who burst through the prejudices of his class and worked side by side with the humblest of the people . . . he was one of the greatest promoters of industry that Ireland had known for centuries. That work of his may well be the beginning of a period, when the aristocracy of Ireland so long estranged from the democracy may come to the front to take the place which every well-wisher of Ireland would be glad to see them occupy."

To his widow, they said, "We may be quick-tempered and impulsive but we are not an ungrateful people and to us that lonely grave in Western Australia will be as revered as any spot held sacred by our race."

She answered that many times he had told her that his country was to him dearer than anything else in the world and she said that he had indeed given his life for his country.

It would be cynical and untrue to say that Cuffe was quickly forgotten but all his activities were centrifugal, towards the small and local, and the pull upon conventionally educated minds towards great remote events was in 1912 almost irresistible. A few weeks later Corbett Wilson, who had flown the channel, settled in Kilkenny and from there did flights of great importance. There was wild excitement and a flow of poetry and prose. The old era seemed to be closing . . . "He flew over Windgap in a clear atmosphere and over the cliffs known as 'The Fairy Steps,' where Finvara the King of the Fairies and the White Woman entertained the ancient hunters. Downwards with the graceful sweep of a sea-bird, till the topmost pinnacle of St. Canice's was the centre of a revolving circle and then a low gliding movement and the machine was running along the grass of the Show Ground."

Here was a theme for the local poets, which Cuffe, that poetical, yet somehow inhibited, man, had failed to provide :

'Twas on the 23rd of May and in the afternoon
That Mr. Corbett Wilson went up to see the moon.
He gradually ascended just like a big cuckoo
And flew for miles around us that day from Ardaloo.

Long life to Mr. Wilson ! May his courage never fail !
May a hundred years pass over e'er his coffin needs a nail !
For none but Him Who rules the waves and can the Storms
subdue
Could shake the nerve of that brave man that day at Ardaloo !

He was entertained by the Protestant Dean at the Club House Hotel and platitudes that differed from ordinary platitudes by being fantastically false as well as dull were uttered and printed. It was felt that a great new era was being ushered in, when nationalism would no longer count. The countries of the earth would be so linked together by speed that all regional jealousies and differences would disappear. Elsewhere in the paper it was written that Lieut. Gregory, a Kilkennyman, had demonstrated at Weymouth that "it is possible to release an object weighing 300 lbs. without disturbing the flight of the air-craft," and that in the Reichstag Herr Bernstein, a deputy, had declared that Germany should take the lead in banning the use of aerial bombs. All these loud noises from far-away, ambiguous and contradictory, drowned the message of Otway Cuffe though it was clear and concrete and from near at hand. He had failed to demonstrate that neighbourliness pays, while what Lieut. Gregory had proved was both dramatic and unanswerable.

After Cuffe's death Ellen Desart found herself no longer able to pick her way with confidence through the increasing complexities of the Gaelic movement. Like her sister-in-law, she came almost to think that "buttons and teeth" were more urgent necessities than poetry and music. She relapsed into being a very intelligent, very philanthropic countess, an excellent committee-woman for Bee-keeping and Cow-testing associations, always ready to give her money or advice for the prevention of disease or the spread of enlightenment, the patronness of public libraries and model hospitals. In fact, as those of the Anglo-Irish who hated the new Ireland left the country, she ceased, as did many others, to be a rebel. Like W. B. Yeats, she found herself latterly defending values that had once seemed so safe that they had needed criticism rather than defence. In the senate, she became a recognized spokesman, as he did, against the narrowness of nationalism and against all petty encroachments upon personal liberty.

She never gave way to the bitter cynicism and despair

which devastated the greater part of the Irish ascendancy class in the twenties, nor, like so many, did she treat as a personal grievance disasters whose origins were in Irish history. These came thick and fast. Early in 1923 the British Army left Kilkenny in trains with "Back to Blighty" chalked on them, as the crowds cheered and the church-bells rang. The soldiers added to the noise by ringing from the carriage windows the large bells, which they had used on the Crossley Tenders. When they had gone the civil war reached a climax and many of the houses of those, who had accepted office as senators from the new government, were burnt. One night in March masked men came to Desart Court and found only two women and a gardener to resist them. They hacked the furniture with axes, piled it in the middle of the room and sprinkled it with petrol. They wrenched the doors from their hinges and added them to the blaze. Some furniture survived in an untouched wing and was sent by van to Kilkenny, but it too was stopped on the way and burnt.

I think that these events gave satisfaction to those who were hostile to the new Ireland. Lady Sybil Lubbock says that her mother seemed almost to feel a sense of relief that, with the calamity, Lord Desart's Irish responsibilities might come to an end. Many of the Anglo-Irish had localised all their Irish loyalties on their estates and, when these disappeared, it was like the loss of a septic limb, after which they could start again crippled but healthy. But Lord Desart was more gravely shattered and wrote with the bitterness of despondency. "I feel most deeply for all those, who, whether for business, honour or profession, are tied to the miserable future of Ireland and perhaps to some awful form of minor death. It is too appalling to think of." His daughter relates how often when he was working at his small garden in Sussex a look of sadness and indifference came over him and she knew he was thinking "of the long borders at Desart and the great flowery terrace at sunset." Before he died he said, "I cannot bear to think of Desart. All gone, all scattered, and we were so happy there. It is sadness itself!"

I quote Lord Desart not to raise regret or sympathy, but to give an idea of the thicket of passionately restricted loyalties from which Otway Cuffe extricated himself and tried to extricate others. Contrasted with the despair which overwhelmed and almost extinguished the rest of his class, his failure, though it seemed complete, came very near to success.

REASON AND MYSTICISM

By Arland Ussher

THE demiurge Urizen (a playful cryptogram for "Your Reason") created the illusion of Matter in the system of Blake ; and the human Reason was indeed the master-of-ceremonies of his century—that Reason, which, like the British Constitution, was thought to have banished for ever the splendours and terrors of the chaotic past. The reasonable 18th Century was, as it were, an interval of placid sleep between two nightmares—the nightmare of predestination in the 17th Century and the nightmare of scientific determinism in the 19th ; a sleep which to the highest religious and artistic genius seemed, nevertheless, to be a sleep of death. For it is not without significance that this most "robust" of centuries was also an age of mad poets, and that "Swift's Hospital" is in some respects its temple ; those adventurous souls who looked over the edge of that flat rational table-land were seized with vertigo—under the clamp of the powdered wig the constricted imaginations sometimes rioted. The age, however, may best be remembered, not indeed as the harmonisation of the Self and the Cosmos—the Subject and the Object—but as their perfect *mariage à la mode* : as contrasted with the ages preceding it, in which the Object hovered excitingly and frighteningly around the Subject like a wooer, and that which followed, when the Subject entered on its stern process of self-discovery through the realities of domestic economy and maternity. The character of the century as of a nuptial celebration is well typified in that most admirable of gossips, Alexander Pope, whose *Essay on Man* only misses truth and profundity by the pleasant ease and speed of its patter—as it were, the dove of the Spirit cast in sugar on a wedding-cake :

All discord, harmony not understood ;
All partial evil, universal good ;
And, spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
One truth is clear : whatever is, is right.

These lines are a perfectly exact statement of the mystic's position, in contradistinction both to the nescience of the Calvinist (to whom God's will, as well as his "way", is incomprehensible) and the agnosticism of the Darwinian (to whom the "way" is more comprehensible than the will, if will there be) ; to express this world-feeling is the true aim of all philosophy which can—in

the words of Johnson—"help us to enjoy life or to endure it"; but it is not here felt or phrased as it would be by a mystic, and Pope's optimism rings hollow enough in our ears to-day. Yet at the moment it announced a liberation—the repellent oyster of the Cosmos had been opened and was found to contain pearls; the modern humanitarian-vitalist temper which interests itself in the obscure feelings of the bivalve was yet to be born. God had been stripped of all irrational, and therefore in reality of all personal, attributes; he was a functionary who had only to administer the law, and who could not be bribed. In the transcendental theism of the Middle Ages the deity was conceived (it is true) as a rational, but much more a *personal* being; like the human person, he reserved the freedom to make departures from his arrangements—miracles were the crude symbol for the incalculability which is personality's essence; he allowed freedom to the human subject, but it was the freedom of a courtier who, if he overstepped the mark ever so slightly, would be consigned to "the Tower," and the situation of those lower orders of the creation, the animals—without soul or will—was in some ways to be preferred. The logic of the Scholastics, grandiosely impressive in detail, always assumed the main things it sought to prove—such as a non-created Creator; the medieval Churchmen loved Truth in their fashion, but the love was as platonic as the Truth was Aristotelian. The little "neo-Tomtits," who to-day try to nestle in those ruined choirs of thought, are seeking a refuge from the storms of the new Dark Age; but this Dark Age has discovered a "Dark God," the *Zertgeist*, who is stronger than the most massive of single human constructions. With Reformation and Counter-Reformation, reason has, as in the adolescent, developed at the expense of life; the working compromise of discipline and impulse breaks down; and the immediate effect is to diminish, not God's freedom, but Man's. The Protestant theologians dispute freewill and the efficacy of prayers for the dead; the Jesuits reject the *synteresis*—the divine spark still glimmering in Man after the Fall; the philosophers (of whom the most esthetically complete is the Fleming Geulincx) tend to deny any interaction between the Self and Matter—for Geulincx the world is a puppet-show in which the director holds all the strings at every instant, manipulating with one hand the limbs of the actor, and with the other, synchronously, his brain. In such a conceit the tragedy of human helplessness reaches its *reductio ad absurdum* and turns to comedy; it is the great era of

the stage—Racine is balanced with Molière, Webster with Congreve. (Later, on the twilight ebb of that rationalist tide, the scientific automaton-world will produce the drama of Tchechov and Shaw). With the century of the "Enlightenment," human Reason has gained its Magna Carta; the *Grand Monarque* of the universe becomes a constitutional monarch to the philosophers, a rather vapidly "benevolent" *roi fainéant* to the theologians. The Mind, in the system of Berkeley, creates its estate like an English landed squire, instead of living among the shadows and cast-off fripperies of the Court; in the system of the Scottish Voltaire, Hume, it is recommended—like a sensible bourgeois—to cultivate its garden and mind its business, neglecting the wholly dubious genealogies of Cause-and-Effect, and the conjuring-shows of the metaphysical mountebanks. By the 19th Century, however, the liberated intellect has produced its own nemesis; the place of the now effete God Reason is usurped by the hard-faced Goddess Nature, into the house left vacant by supernaturalism and swept and garnished by rationalism enter the seven and seventy devils of the secular and political-Messianic religions. Darwin and Marx find in the here-and-now the Hell which deism had banished from the next world—or at least the Purgatory; and after 1914 the hope that that Purgatory is leading to a Heaven on earth fades away. But biology and genetic science begin to detect pattern in the medley, and mathematical physics to find Rest in the inter-co ordination of a universe of Motion; do we approach a new Olympus, a new Genesis? Paley's Clock-maker is gone with all his Cartesian scrap-metal, but still an Artist and an Actor blooms in Mendel's sweet-pea. Shall we dare the last lap and complete the circuit—from transcendental mysticism to rationalism, from rationalism to immanent mysticism? Will the *mauvais ménage* of the Self and the Not-Self attain the adult and realistic Love that is a recognition and balancing of contradictions—the Love for the Object in its very objectionableness? Shall we end by discovering the Unknown God, Who is not, but Who is the "significant form" of everything that is—the "harmony not understood," which is hinted in the discords of the Surrealists? The scientist, like an aged Moses, sees the Promised Land afar off—will the philosopher-artist, a young Joshua, enter and possess it?

GOING FOUR-FOOTED

By Anthony Rye

GRANDFATHER chairs half as wide and deep as the ancient hearth stood either side of it, and in one of these, by the light of candles on a small table at elbow helped out by the flames of the ash or beech logs, I would sit on long autumn or winter evenings, burying myself back from too much warmth, and write, or read my favourite authors. Perhaps it was a play; Sheridan, I remember, I read first this way, and "She Stoops to Conquer"; and then my lights seemed to simulate footlights, and the hearth's bright oblong a stage. The evening began with the entry of tea-things about five, but the serious reading never till after supper. In the afternoons there had been a long walk to make everything more desirable. As one sat and read on and on one was scarcely conscious of a certain soft low peaceful sound—a sound so much there, so much a part of these hours and pleasures, that now I never sit by that or any similar hearth without hearing the ghost of it all around me. It was the lapping of the dogs' tongues—as quiet a sound as the lapping of the flames—as they cleaned their legs and feet free of mud and burrs and thornlets, salving the wounds made on the run when chasing after rabbits, by thorns, stumps or barbed-wire, and then unnoticed in the excitement of hot blood. Pads often would be cut and bleeding, the skin of chest and brisket torn. Dew-claws which had never been cut off in puppyhood lost their curled, superfluous horn again and again. Sometimes a dog would give a little sharp whimper of distress, but work on, lipping and blowing and tussling-out a sharpness between the toes, or a clotting in the short-growing hairs, daintly, with the front teeth, the nose writhed upwards to facilitate this. So they burnished themselves, to settle curled up at last with a sigh, a long "snoof" of relief. Tails would be twitched over muzzles, hind-legs gathered up, with generally a foreleg stretched out and the other bent beneath; eyes would narrow and close, but one every now and then open, an eyebrow twitch a little, an ear be brought lazily half to attention.

Between the company of books and the company of such as these, what rest, what recreation! There is nothing like the companionship of dogs for children, and youths too. It takes away the fear of the lonely dark, and gives the sheepish, uncertain, still

a little timid, still a little rash personality, in adolescence, a needed extra to balance and confirm it, at a time when it is inclined to doubt its strength, or rush through the world of experiences giddily. You can be silent for a great while in dim solitary places, and get the fruits and suffer none of the ills of that—none of the narrowness or morbidity. For you are not alone. You can and do commune, either silently or aloud, with the sharing animal; and in the latter case with none of the sense of incongruity that self-awareness, in real solitude, too suddenly intrudes. The dog can “speak” to you too: but it never interrupts.

Our dogs were hunting dogs—call them “Long dogs,” “Dinner dogs,” “Lurchers,” or simply “useful” dogs. They were not of a breed found in the stud book, nor were they considered respectable to own. No gipsy ever passed them by without a glance, and offers for them in the public bars were legion, especially for the elder of the pair, the mother. We first came across Fly, as she was called, in that “green navel” of our Selborne paradise, Church meadow, where as children we had found so much else that was beautiful. She was accompanying her owner home after an evening run. Flitting, a pale wraith ever restlessly in motion (she was not then two years old, a maiden bitch), she came at once to heel on his making a slight squeaking with his lips. She rested her forepaws on his chest, reached up to lick his face, then turned her head, with its long muzzle and fan-like, spreading ears, and fixed us with her honey-coloured eyes in a pale clear stare. Hers was that beauty which, by jolting people out of their accepted notions, causes at first almost an irritation, a sense of alarm; the kind of feeling one sometimes discovers in those who are confronted with a work of unusual perfection in art. Because of her extremely pale colouring she looked less a dog than the phantom of a dog; and all the motions of this frail-seeming but firm strong and supple body showed such control, over energy so violent, or so passionate, as to bring a shock of surprise as at something unnatural, or too natural, like nakedness. Pale—silvery—were the legs, the underparts, the shoulders, neck and face. The flanks deepened to a light fawn. Along the back was a ridge of darker, coarser hair, looking almost blue against the pale ground. The nose was black where tan might have been expected, and the eyes, too, were edged with black, as the eyes of houris with kohl.

I am not fanatical as to dogs, but I have to admit that of all

the beautiful creatures I have seen this was the most beautiful ; at least, no other living thing moved me so strongly in that way. It had to do, I believe, as much with fitness of proportion as with anything. Greyhounds were too large, too snaky, and comparatively brainless ; collies were too hairy ; and since it was this kind of dog I favoured most, Fly epitomised all the good while she actually seemed to have none of the drawbacks. She was, indeed, perfectly proportioned. One could see it in any detail of her. The way her head was set where it joined the neck. The neck itself, broad from the shoulders, swelling and tapering, not too long (it must be confessed her neck was not quite long enough for her job, being, professionally speaking, a fault in her). You could see it in the well-balanced tail, the hairs of which spread out a little towards the end before ekeing away to the point, which had a little jaunty twirl to it. Even the extraordinary ears, which at attention stood out like the wings of birds, not at all the neat folding ears of a greyhound—ears which were, I believe, what chiefly caused the sensations I have described in one seeing her for the first time—were, when taken with the rest, beautiful as well as odd ; and together all these things amounted to a perfection of rhythmical balance ; the mean of strength with elegance. Nothing like it was ever before seen, or seen again. Those who knew the animal and had taken the virtue in never forgot it. Her first master, who, of course, had bred her for use, and who had owned many dogs of the same type, not only always held her by far the best, but had for her a place apart in his affections ; allowing her, when in later days she used to return to her old home, to sit about on chairs and sofa ; a thing scarcely to be looked for in that world, wherein a dog old and useless cannot reasonably be expected to be regarded sentimentally, and is usually soon got rid of.

It is true to say that the acquisition of this lovely creature very materially altered existence for us. Henceforth we ceased to be altogether bipeds for an appreciable part of our days—and nights. We “went four-footed” as the saying is. There were times when the close association with our dogs allowed us to partake of a very high, intoxicating elation. Their prowess became ours, and according as they were cunning and swift and godlike in their exercise so we, we felt, took on something of these attributes. For my part I identified myself so closely with my dog, Sam, that his failures and triumphs became my own to a peculiar

degree. Indeed I am pretty sure that I never felt so intensely about my own doings, at one period, as about his, to the extent of passionately wanting to have successes recognised. While Fly's professional merits were instantly perceived by those qualified to judge, Sam's did not always go unchallenged, although he had been the likeliest-looking puppy in her first litter, and this I found difficult to bear. My dog was slightly the larger, his back was longer, and he had the advantage in length of leg. But his neck was shorter even than his mother's, and he was not anything like so clever. Moreover he lacked her dash—her fire. All this could not be denied, and I was competitive enough, although appreciation of his gifts did not in the least lead me to detract from hers, to be anxious, to the point of over-anxiety, to have them done justice to. Unfortunately it so happened that whenever he was successful I was out alone with him.

I was a poor poacher, and would not have been entertained as a companion for a moment by a true one. To begin with, I would not, could not observe the proper hours. Nor, in the end, the proper seasons. It became unseemly; and for this reason—and another—I eventually gave it up. That day, however, was long in coming, for some years I had no passion remotely approaching that of the pursuit of hares. It was after my brother had gone abroad, leaving me with the sole charge of both dogs, that this passion became really absorbing; but even while we had been together I had on one occasion given a rather salient instance of the extent to which it had got a grip on me. In a little grassy valley we put up, one afternoon, a leveret. The half-grown creature turned and turned so deftly up and down the steep slope as to baffle not only Sam but the peerless Fly herself. It is true she was not then at her best. She had been once one of Cynthia's dogs, the huntress chaste and fair whom, in a canine way, she surely much resembled; a slip of that goddess's own moonlight. Three litters in two years had taken some of her strength, some of her liteness away, and now her lines were a little blurred. We were so intent watching this course, as the dogs came in again and again to chop idly on air, and as they and the leveret drifted to and fro up and down the hillside (but getting with each turn a little nearer to the thick thorn hedge at the summit) that we never noticed we had, the whole group of us, our own audience. The doctor and his wife, taking a stroll, had emerged from the trees on the opposite side of the valley, and were now standing in the

open in full view of us, as we of them. It may be that we did notice them, but were too excited to care ; at any rate, when the leveret finally succeeded in beating the dogs to the hedge in a seemingly miraculous but actually cleverly calculated escape, I for my part was so mortified that, with no fear or thought of making myself ridiculous, I cast myself face downwards on the grass. Could even Tchertop-Hanov have acted more instinctively ? I who so appreciated " A Sportsman's Sketches " later on here seem myself to have come from the pen of Turgenev !

That may give some idea of the extent to which I was mastered, not by any lust to kill hares and rabbits but by the desire to, as it were, vicariously triumph through these dogs ; to see and in a way live the beauty of their action ; to taste its consummation. And it grew stronger. I began to go out hunting up and down all the empty hours of morning and mid-day, not only in the evening when the hares came out to feed. And then at night as well. It became a craving ; and when it came to this sort of thing even in the summer a crisis was reached. For then no time, no inclination, for the reading of books ; no sane recreation by the fire afterwards. The short nights prolonged the excesses of the long days. I came—this, you now see, is a kind of confession—I came to hunting even in May. Once I got up at half-past-four on a May morning and went, lost and forward-looking, to those afflicted fields that had become almost the only ones I now visited, and, oblivious of singing birds and springing flowers, set, in the person of my dogs, upon a very old, very large, Jack hare. It was the largest hare I have ever seen, and it fought hardest for life. This course, too, was run in a little compass ; the hare was at no time further than twelve or fifteen yards from the wood which, had it succeeded in reaching, would have saved it, since our dogs were of a kind that hunt only a sighted quarry. To that sanctuary it could just never attain, and the three beat up and down parallel with it for what seemed a long time, and must in reality have been quite four minutes, until the turn was made a fraction too late and a dog had him. It was then for the first time that I had a feeling of guilt : it was too old, too tough a hare to eat ; and besides, it was the wrong period. I got rid of that gaunt body somehow and went soberly home.

That guilt was much revived, much, much increased when, shortly after, I killed a beautiful doe hare, her young within her and far advanced. This was the true beginning of my conversion,

which could not have been completed long after, for nightingales are in full song in May and rare to hear beyond it, and it was after visiting Selborne Hill to hear the nightingales in great number that my last experience came about. It was a lovely night; the moon was full, the nightingales were at their best. Filled with the great vague thoughts their songs engendered—a mood borrowed, of course, from Keats, but refracted, lacking the lyric intensity, the concentrated light, his dreadful situation had conferred—I moved slowly about the common on top of the hill, almost forgetting the dogs altogether. Then I went down by the western extremity to the village road, and with the extreme flexibility of youth—or was it mania?—somehow found myself, with mood switched, going not directly home but striking off at an angle, taking the footpath to the open fields.

Let me quickly say that the pleasures I was here again about to enjoy were of no ordinary kind. The night was mysterious and still, and to be moving quietly in the lonely shadowed space, the protective solitude, was almost cosy; while behind all was the deep hunting-keenness—the magical compulsion, the drawing forward to a simple end. One was like a somnambulist, but at the same time all the senses were alert. Awareness was more than ordinary. While I had been loitering about the hill or walking the straight road the dogs had continually been running forward and then back, wavering shapes in the bushes at my side, or filmy ones flickering in the moonlight ahead and then rustling and panting near again. Now, in the fields, I lost sight of them entirely. I could hear them, however, and so form a fair idea of what was going on. In tall-growing stuff, like clover or beet, they would be bounding, springing high in order to see what they had surprised and started in the way of hare or rabbit. Their pads sounded quite loud on the dry earth or crisp large leaves, if it were roots, so that I heard a succession of quick close raps and then a pause, followed by an accentuation as they came down after the long leap. When a hare was put up so close that in the moonlight they could follow it straightway by gaze the sounds at once altered, becoming the regular two-fold beat of the feet of a dog at full stretch, loud at first, with perhaps the lighter noise of the hare itself, making two to their one, then gradually dying away. Now this was a great stretch of fields, really one plain, for the hedges were intermittent and nowhere separated the space entirely into individual fields, which lay between the main road and some three miles of hanging

copse, heavily preserved. The thick, cover of these precipitous slopes, hazel, oak, ash, was about a mile distant from this road, which ran roughly parallel with it, and for somewhere along its fencing the hares would invariably make, wherever in the fields they were put up. It was wire-netted, and racing directly down the shallow incline towards it they would risk the close-pressing of their pursuers, making a huge leap over it to safety, for they knew the dogs would never follow them far into the wood. If it misjudged this leap the hare was in the netting and instantly caught, but a full-grown and experienced one could generally manage it. The superstition that a hare can run faster up than down hill may have some truth in it, but I have seen them turned on hillsides and I have seen them increase a lead astonishingly downhill, when they knew that safety lay right ahead. Since I knew which way the course would be likely to proceed, I had nothing to do but run by the shortest route to the woodside. I listened all the time for the one sound certain to direct me now if too far off still to catch the others. It came. The loud, agonised, terrified outcry sprang into the silence, like the flame of a smothered fire on a heath, very near to my arriving-place, a little way down the fence and to my right: long before it had finished I too had joined the dogs at their business. "Crying out for Uncle" is how country boys describe that cry, and certainly "Uncle! Uncle!" gives an adequate idea of it. So also does the piteous cry of the Kildeer plover. It is a terrible sound; and it is my belief that not the most hardened amongst us but hears it with an agony of mind which somehow registers deep, and which only hard expediency, or half-crazy excitement, or grossness arising from long years of brutalising work, can ever dull.

There are some states of mind which are so rare, so extraordinary, that it is difficult, if not impossible to convey them. As I stooped, or knelt among the dogs—and my impression remains that I lay flat and grovelled, only I do not understand why this should have been—with this pitiful cry, and the snarls, and harsh breathing muffled in fur, in my ears, and the stir of intense effort all about me (for it must be remembered that the hare is a large animal, comparatively), I seemed, as it were, to become detached altogether from myself; to be literally beside myself, and to see and hear all with a new and fearful distinctness, though as if remote from me. I felt suddenly my loneliness in the darkness of the night, crouching in the desolate field, in the isolation of wild-

ness. I heard the feral sounds and the agonised sounds with horror. Such a thing had never happened before ; I never gave it a chance to happen again. I remember I stuffed that poor body—also uselessly destroyed—as far as I could into a wide-mouthed rabbit hole under a hedge. It was the last one. The old triumphant feeling of the return with a weight of swinging slackness in the hand had gone for ever.

ART AND MYSTERY OF HAND PRINTING

By James Guthrie

HAD I when young been flung neck and crop into it, I should probably have hated printing from the start. As it was, I began at the very beginning, but with a strong artistic bias and a natural liking for doing things. The craft so long to learn did not scare me as it does so many clerkly men ; and while many were bored with books very early in life, and others more keen to swim the Channel than paint great pictures, a verdant kind of spirit kept me going. To be competitive was not in my nature, so that the battling ambitions of the Town neither impressed nor allured me. The work, in fact, seemed of more importance than the men. The books of the Kelmscott Press had at that time raised a great palaver about limited editions ; but the common idea that the younger craftsmen were derived from Morris is a bad guess. He was a rich man, he employed printers, while the humbler fry, first from necessity and then from choice, worked at the press themselves. After an experience of nearly fifty years, I am firmly of the opinion that personal workmanship is an absolute essential to the proper knowledge of this art. Moreover, the art is only an art when handled by an artist, despite the many nice things done by craftsmen. Its limitations are severe, its scope what it always has been, though put to commercial uses during a lag in invention. Only by obeying the conditions can the hand press reveal again its powers and capacities instead of mild, home-made effects. One has to walk before one can fly, and, in my case, the press had a real usefulness as a vehicle for printing illustrations

along with text, thus saving me from wasting my time among editors and publishers. Being an artist first and only afterwards a printer, the difference between a print made by machine and one made by hand was obvious : the one being dead, the other alive. I began to see it was by laying emphasis upon the hand, and being curious about every stage of the work, that real differences became marked. This implement was no longer a weak survival from an age gone by, but, put to its own uses, an ideal means whereby experiments could be carried out and advances made in new directions. What the old men must have felt when printing was new and the future full of rich promise became more and more clear to me, as close intimacy with the press enabled me to try out ideas with blocks and type, and eventually with plates, guided always by a feeling for colour and a desire to go by suggestions arising in the course of the work. What is so often mixed with contrary motives and undigested opinion becomes clear when problems are studied at first-hand ; with things that happen, rather than by popular theories and pretty legends. My work veered in different directions ; for "movements" create, not only the patron who is bemused, but the tradesman who ministers to him. This trap, easily a dangerous one, I was in no mind to fall into, preferring to improve my books by better construction. The type area must, I thought, be in correct proportional ratio to the page ; verse must be aligned and ranged and given a shape. Ornament must play its part, and be as correctly planned, but with leave to be rich or simple according to the theme, not merely an idle flourish. The hand-made book could thus sustain a character of its own and might even serve to demonstrate a different order of ideas. Instead, therefore, of being an antiquated survival, vainly attempting to remain alive by using a fashion already exhausted by the machine, here was an art no less difficult than before, and yet no less excitingly full of new vitality. An art, and a mystery, even as it had appeared at the first. The press is a simple implement, but so is the brush ; and no age need imitate another so long as men have something of their own to express, and skill enough and wit enough to master a technique for the purpose. No poet or sculptor or musician wishes his work to be engine-turned or rendered fool-proof ; nor, I think, need a printer, who is interested in printing as such, envy or feel in duty bound to men or machines which go upon a different errand.

The block book, in which the page is made in one piece, was an attractive clue, but some tentative trials with plates afforded

a wider scope. William Blake had used plates in his own way, missing, curiously enough, the engraved line which he had at his hand, and resorting to subsequent hand colouring. By filling the lines with colour, I found it was simple to produce plates by which text and ornament could be harmonised together. A continual reference of design to print, and print to design, showed that the pictorial element could be avoided and unity of effect attained. The page was in one piece, all the colours printed in a single impression ; it only remained to make books in this new kind. They might be plain ; they might be as richly-coloured as I knew how ; they might vary copy by copy, or page by page, so long as they were in tone. The problems of this art are artistic problems, so much scope for anyone with plenty of invention and a good eye for colour. Our regular bookman would, of course, be shocked at this escapade ; but when has he contributed to the art anything but his resistance to different ideas ? Theoretically my plates were perfect ; actually they were a continual difficulty, at one time too shallow, at another too deep. They wiped out ; they strained my hands ; they refused their office. A couple of world wars did their work in among, making me feel the force of Michael Angelo's dictum that what was left of a statue after it had been rolled down a hill was the essential part. The essentials are what interest me, although I do not share the general opinion that our age must of necessity be a dull one, and that the arts have no better fate than to tail behind pundits and politicians. It is as natural to be gay as to be dull ; to strike out, as to be humble and mindful. Somebody has said that there is no merit in being the last of a line ; but neither is there in being the first or in between. What matters is the thing we do and the spirit we bring to it.

I should have liked space in which the question of colour in printing could be explored ; for there is much for the bookman yet, who is not too wedded to habit and custom, besides black and red, and books as he knows them.

I have written a good deal about variety and ornament, which might give the impression that I was flying in the face of order and restraint. Actually, I only seek to show that there are varieties ; that type and ornament belong to the same art—an art of line—and that restraint is often a term used by men who are at an exhaust and have nothing to restrain. The only restraint I understand is in suiting things to some particular purpose, with plenty in reserve. And I confess myself a purist in books, even when trying to dissolve *Songs of Innocence* in colour, poem by poem.

THE GEORGIAN OBSERVATORY

By Temple Lane

Because men pry upon the heavens here, he
Who housed their speculations made for these
An austere frieze in pattern of the key—
Perpetual keys—of ultimate lock which bars
The terminal knowledge: and where a woman went
To decorate her master's leisure, he fashioned
A little pattern of domestic stars.

The hoary clock keeps astral time: Time's self
Fades past like outworn summers. On the terrace
The white rose centuries old bears lunar craters
At her heart, over-knowing without commotion.
Derisive Venus wanes: and radio-flashes
Warn the new seers (who appraise the planets,
Not stellar influence!) where the new Comet splashes
Fanwise his wake in their well-charted ocean.

They hold so much, so high and free they seek!
They will catch the Southern Cross the æons let fly;
Bring here, impaled on the lens like a butterfly
Pin-held, their prey between Jupiter and Mars.
But he was sad and wise and limited,
But he was sad and wise, with notions weak,
Who now remembers, free and Pluto-led,
The key for those who made of dreams their dado,
The little pattern of domestic stars.

CROW GROVE

By Mary Callinagh

Black boughs against the nacre of the West;
Black nests against a pool of primrose sky;
Black wings lashed by the April in wild breasts
To toil with twigs and straws till day-light dies.
When I am gone, will he cut down your trees—

Some careful peasant, brooding on the soil
 (Which tree-roots waste, where rooks purloin the seed !)
 And only looking up to curse your noise ?
 Well ! We have fostered beauty while we might—
 Have kept a little space for you to breed ;
 Loved solemn stalkings, sudden wheeling joys,
 Grave cawings, small self-conscious piracies,
 In our small day. Our fathers' eagle gone ;
 Their bittern, their red-deer and their hound
 Far down the road the grey wolf travelled on
 Their forest shrunken to our narrow grounds.
 We go ? The penny-man may grudge you trees ?
 Black birds, may grubs consume his toil !
 Good-night.

THE BOG FAIRY TELLS ABOUT STAR-PEOPLE

By Mairin Cregan

SHE lived beside a pool in the bog. In the summer, there were many little creatures crowding round to keep her company. There were humans too, saving turf and drawing it home. But when the cold days of autumn approached, most of these disappeared. By the time winter was in, there was no one, save the Cripple Boy. He lived with his mother in the long, thatched house on the edge of the bog. On frosty days, he sometimes walked that way to look at the frozen pools and to get ice. In winter nights, however, no one came. Neither human nor animal. So she used to feel lonely. Or at least she did until she took to listening to the stars.

In the beginning, she just watched them. They were sometimes still, sometimes twinkling, in the dark dome of the sky. Then, it was more than just seeing them. For, in the stillness and silence of freezing, winter nights, she began to *hear* something up there.

She listened with all her might.

What she discovered by listening was, that the Seven Little Sisters were mischievous children. Or, if not actually mischievous, well, at least, troublesome. They kept running round the heavens, looking for someone to play with them, and no one seemed willing,

When they went to the Great Bear he told them he had no time for playing. He was much too busy, looking after the Pole star, seeing that it gave proper light and direction to the sailors below on the earth. Off they ran to the Little Bear then. He had no time either. Besides, the Pole star was *his* affair, he said, and not the Great Bear's at all. It was he who really looked after it and kept it in the same spot. If he left his place, to go play with them, the Pole star might move too and then all the sailors in ships would lose their way and be drowned.

"Bother these old sailors in the humans' world," the sisters pouted. "Let them drown."

"Gr-r- Gr-r." growled the two Bears. And that sound soon sent them off.

Then they would try the Lion. But he was much too important to play with silly girls.

"Don't walk in front of me there, please. You will hide me from the earth. Kindly remember that the people living in hot, dry countries are always looking up, trying to see me. No wonder. Because when I shine forth, their rivers overflow the banks and water their crops. Then they have food. So, please stand aside, there," the Lion would say.

Occasionally they tried Sirius the dog.

"Come on, Sirry," they begged. "Let's have a go at those two bears. We'll 'tig' them."

Sirius, very indignant that they should dare speak so familiarly to him, the brightest star in the whole sky, made no answer. "Sirry," indeed! He just stared at them with unblinking eye, and kept staring so hard that he dazzled and blinded them clean out of his way. Indeed they had to bow their heads and put their hands over their eyes to recover their sight after he had finished with them.

But there was one person who never failed to join in their fun. This was Orion. And if he wasn't brighter, he was bigger than any of them. A great, tall hunter, taking his giant's stride across the sky, with a quiver full of arrows hanging from the sparkling, shimmering belt round his waist. Orion was always ready to play with them. They might jump on his shoulder, run

between his legs or swing out of his belt, as much as they liked. He just laughed, a mighty laugh that shattered the stillness of the night.

Their favourite game with Orion was to pull an arrow out of the quiver and get him to shoot. Placing a tiny star on the tip of the arrow, he would bend his bow and aim downwards.

"Twang!"

That was a falling star.

Then putting another star on a fresh arrow, he would aim upwards.

"Twang!"

That was a shooting star.

And no one could ever find out where those arrows landed.

Sometimes they would pull out an arrow and beg him to aim it at Sirius or the Lion.

"Please, Orion! Go on! Just to give them a good fright. Think of the lovely jump they'd make when they heard a '*Twang!*' go past their tail. You needn't aim to hit, you know."

Orion might have done even this for them, only that Cassiopeia, sitting there quietly on her chair, always overheard.

"Orion!" she called. "You're not to do it. Why do you listen to them? You're spoiling those children."

"Me? Spoiling them?"

"Yes. You. Run away at once, you girls," she called to them sharply and they had to go.

Now sometimes these Seven Little Sisters got tired of all the chasing round the sky. Then they stood, in a cluster, heads together, quite, quite still and gazed down on the humans' world. And, it so happened that when they did this, they found themselves looking straight into the pool beside which our Bog Fairy lived.

"Oh! how lovely it is," cried one, peering down at the bog. "Such a great, big, wide space to play around in. I can see no cross lady there, sitting in her chair and ordering people to keep quiet," she whispered, glancing round at Cassiopeia.

"Nor can I see any growly bears, either," said another, "ready to snap at you for just running round and having a little fun."

"Oh!" said the fourth Little Sister, "if only we could touch that pool and feel what it is like! There are no pools up here, in this dreary place. How inviting it looks! One would think it wanted us to go down. Look!"

"So it does! So it does!" chorused the others, really believing that the pool was calling them down to earth. "If only we could go!" they sighed.

They wished so hard and thought so much about it that, in time, one of them got an idea. She explained it to the others and, after much discussion and excited whispering, they went to Orion and made a suggestion to him.

"What? what? Tut! tut!" twinkled Orion merrily. "Couldn't be done. No, couldn't be done."

They surrounded him eagerly.

"Please, Orion, please! It's quite easy. If we are willing to risk it, why not you? Besides it will help you to find out if you are, really and truly, a good marksman. It will be the greatest shot you ever fired."

Orion thought over this.

"Hm, yes. Well, explain it to me again," he said pensively.

They started to chatter, all together.

"Now, now, silence!" he commanded. "Wait a minute. You tell me," he said to the Third Sister who was the one who had thought of the plan.

"It is like this, Orion," she said. "Put each one of us on the tip of an arrow and shoot us down, one after another, into the pool. It is quite simple."

"Ho-ho-ho," Orion laughed. "You want to bathe in the mortals' pool, do you? You want your Orion to send you down to earth on arrows, is it?"

"'Sh! 'Sh!" they warned. "Someone will hear you. Nobody must know."

Their warning was too late, however. Cassiopeia had overheard what he said.

She turned round in her chair.

"Orion! You have those children completely spoiled. Why do you listen to such nonsense? If they went down there, something dreadful might happen to them. Besides, how are they to get back again? Don't listen to them. You are so foolish that you might end by giving in to them."

Which was just what did happen.

At first, he was altogether against such an adventure because of the difficulty of the return journey.

"I may succeed in getting you down safely, but who will get you back here again?" he asked.

To his astonishment, they had an answer for that too.

"We have thought it all out," they told him.

One of them had often noticed, she said, that during the night, little puffs of fog like tiny clouds, rolled low over the bog in all directions. As dawn came, they lifted right off the ground and floated up and up into the sky. Couldn't they easily jump on to these puffs and float comfortably up home again?

"We just step on to these, stand still and up we are lifted without any trouble."

This sounded such a good plan that, at last, Orion agreed.

Oh! what a scene there was in the sky, the first night those daring little sisters ventured down to earth! All the stars came out to watch, twinkling with excitement. Several of them even left their places and shot here and there across the sky, to take up better positions for seeing.

The Little Bear became quite alarmed at the behaviour of the Pole Star—which wanted to change its place too.

"Don't move!" cautioned the Little Bear, desperately. "No matter what happens, *you* must keep quite still. Think of the sailors in the world below. If you move, their ships will go helter-skelter, in all directions. You daren't stir. It's too dangerous."

So the Pole Star, alone, of all the stars in the heavens, that night, did not move.

When the long-expected moment arrived, every star trembled.

Orion, a shining giant, standing with his legs wide apart, put his hands to his shimmering, sparkling belt. He chose an arrow and balanced the first little sister carefully on its tip. She sat on it, confidently, keeping her arms close to her sides and gripping the barb with her hands. Though she was really very frightened, she would not show it now, with everyone looking on.

Orion fixed the arrow to the bow, bent the bow in a great curve. Carefully, steadily, he aimed at the pool so far, far below him.

The sky went suddenly quiet. The six remaining sisters held their breaths, in terror now, as they saw the eldest one, perched so dangerously over an unknown world, into which she was going to spring. The littlest sister, unable to stand it any longer, was just about to shout to her, to stop, when—

"Twang!"

The arrow had sped on its way, bringing the brave but trembling star with it.

They listened, in tense silence, breathless, waiting for— They didn't quite know what they were waiting for.

Then a faint echo came back to them.

“ ‘Plash ! ’ ”

They began to breathe and talk again. Surely that sound meant she had landed in the pool. After that, the twinkling and sparkling and excitement increased, while Orion put each sister in turn, on an arrow, and sent her diving into the pool below.

His aim had been straight and true.

Now the Cripple Boy who lived in the cottage was often ill and could not sleep. On this particular night, he lay awake in bed, watching the stars through the window pane.

“ Mother ! ” he called softly.

His mother came to his bedside.

“ I've just seen seven strange falling stars,” he said. “ First one and then six following shortly afterwards. They seemed to go right into the bog. I never saw anything like it before. All the stars are shivering and queer to-night, I notice.”

“ Yes, my pet,” his mother soothed him gently, “ and now you must try to go to sleep again.”

For she thought he had been dreaming.

On that night too, the Bog Fairy, sleeping under her white silk canopy of ceannabhán, was awakened by the swish of the first arrow and its splash in the water. This was an unusual sound breaking the quiet of a winter's night but when she heard it repeated six times, she thought it very mysterious. She got up and went over to the pool to investigate.

Oh !

Magic of magics !

Star-people !

There they were, splashing and dipping in *her* pool. Laughing and chuckling as they clung to each other. Then separating and jumping on and off the seven arrows which now drifted on the surface of the water like seven little rafts.

It was surprise enough for the Bog Fairy to see such antics in the pool. But you can imagine her amazement when, just before daybreak, she saw one star after the other mount little billows of fog and float up and up till they were quite out of sight.

That was the first night. But, night after night, they came

again. The fairy, hidden behind her ceannabhán, fearful of moving lest she should frighten them away, watched and watched and longed for a chance to talk to them.

It came at last.

She used to hear the sisters, while bathing, sing a little song which seemed to say that the more they dipped in the pool, the happier they became. This being so, they naturally remained each night a little longer than the night before. One night they delayed so long that dawn had come before they knew it. When they prepared to return, the sun had already lifted most of the fog and mist from the bog. Seeing they had stayed too late, they rushed about, in all directions, looking for suitable little puffs on which to mount for the return journey. Six of them managed to pick out good, thick ones but the youngest, in her flurry, jumped on one which broke under her and she fell through it back to the ground.

She screamed.

"Help! Come back! Wait for me!"

Alas! It was no use calling for help. Her sisters could do nothing for her. As they floated farther and farther away they looked down, full of anxiety at the thought of their weakest and littlest one being left behind.

The Bog Fairy, seeing what had happened, now rushed out and, catching the shivering little star, tried to hoist her on to a thick ball of fog which was just then rolling by. The star scooted along, one foot on land and one on fog and she would certainly have fallen again had not the fairy, with one big push, mounted her to safety.

It had been a narrow escape and she was a long distance behind her sisters that night.

The Cripple Boy saw this too.

"Mother," he said, the following morning, "I saw another strange thing in the sky last night, just before daylight."

"More falling stars—like the last time?" she asked, laughing and teasing him.

"No, indeed," he replied "but the very opposite. This time it was shooting stars. First six shot up from the very middle of the bog, it seemed to me. And, after a long time, a seventh went up too, not so quickly as the others. Do you think something strange was happening?"

"Yes, my pet, maybe indeed you are right," she said, rubbing his hot forehead. "Or maybe it was a dream. Was it?"

"No, I'm sure it was not a dream."

And, somehow, this time, his mother thought not also.

After that exciting night, the Bog Fairy and the Sisters became fast friends. She was eager to know how they lived in the sky and they were equally curious as to how earth-people lived. So they were always telling each other stories.

"Your earth looks like a many-coloured ball to us," they told her. "Blue mountains, green fields and forests, and the rivers like silver threads running through them."

"And what do you like best of our world?" she asked.

"We like everything. But what we can't understand is, why some of the high mountains always wear caps of snow and others wear caps of fire?"

Unfortunately, the Bog Fairy had never heard of volcanoes so she could not answer that question.

She did tell them, though, of things closer to the ground. Of bees for instance. How they built their nests in mossy banks or in a hollow tree; how they had a queen and how they made honey. They thought this very, very wonderful.

When she told them of the badger and otter and rabbits and other animals and even birds, like the kingfisher, building their houses right under the earth, they laughed in wonder and delight.

"Tell more! Tell more!" they cried eagerly.

"How can they possibly breathe with the earth on top of them?" asked one.

"Aren't they all suffocated?" cried another.

For, an existence like that seemed utterly impossible to star-people who lived such an open-air life—with the winds of heaven and earth always blowing about them.

Now the fourth Little Sister was rather inclined to look for notice. There was a reason for this. She felt that her three older sisters were treated as grown-ups and her three younger got all the petting and she, being in the middle, got no attention from anyone. So, she was always pushing herself forward. She was very anxious now to show this Bog Fairy how superior she was.

"It is such a pity," she said, one night, "that though you live on the earth you don't really know what it looks like."

The Bog Fairy raised her eyebrows in surprise.

"Well, what a funny thing to say! *Of course*, I know what it looks like," she laughed back.

"Yes," went on the other, calmly admiring her reflection in the pool, "perhaps you know this little bog here that you live on. But you can't see the whole earth, in one ball, as we can."

The Bog Fairy realised immediately that this was true but she did not like the tone in which the star informed her of it.

Afterwards she thought quite a lot about this and she envied those sky people who could see so much more than earth-dwellers.

"Is there nothing that we can see and they can not?" she asked herself.

She thought and thought and thought.

A few nights later she found herself once more alone with the fourth Sister.

"I think it is such a pity that, though you live in the sky, you cannot see a rainbow, as we do," she said slyly.

"A what?" cried the Sister.

"A rainbow," she repeated. "It is only to be seen in the day-time. Down here, we think it the greatest glory of the sky."

"Greater than Orion? Or than Sirius the Dog Star?" demanded the sister with a mocking laugh.

"*We* think so," stated the Bog Fairy firmly. "But then it's so hard for you to understand this when you can't see it from down here."

There was silence for a few moments.

"Oh, of course, I have seen a lunar rainbow," the Sister said with some hesitation.

"A what?"

"A moonlight rainbow, you know," she said, confidently.

This was a shock for the Bog Fairy. She was vexed too, at the smug way the other was smiling, as if people on earth couldn't possibly have any thing that she didn't have.

Then, by the greatest good luck, she thought of the sun.

"Oh, but that is not a real rainbow," she said. "You should see the rainbow from down here in the daylight, made by the *Sun's* beams! A glorious arc across the whole sky, flaming in gorgeous colours of red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet. That is something no star can ever see" she declared.

And as neither of them was really quite sure about the matter they changed the subject abruptly.

The nights were never long enough for all the stories they had

to tell, and, as well as stories, they gave each other warnings and in the end, so great was their friendship that they even exchanged secrets.

"I want to warn you about ice," The Bog Fairy said. "I beg of you to be careful when the pond is frozen. For if you dived into it you might be smashed to bits."

"We want to warn you, too, about thunder storms," the second Sister said. "You need not be afraid of the noise thunder makes. It can't harm you. But when you see lightning flash, then go into your house and stay there."

There was one secret however, that the Seven Little Sisters would not tell.

"Will you tell me, *please*," asked the Bog Fairy, "where you go in the summer? You appear in the sky in the autumn and stay there all winter and spring and then you go away in the summer. Where to?"

"Ah! wouldn't you like to know?" they teased her, laughing in chorus and hugging each other's waists.

"Yes, I would. Tell me. *Please!*" she begged.

But no matter how hard she coaxed, that was a secret they never would tell.

"THE POET'S VIRGINITY"

By Y. L.

IN three recently translated essays* the idea of poetic virginity has been considered, explicitly by Patrice de la Tour du Pin, implicitly by Paul Valéry and Francis Ponge. If one thinks of the terms "classical" and "romantic" as referring to a shifting of the stress, with a variety of modulations, on the two aspects of art: form-content and content-form, it is possible to trace in these essays not only some of the implications of this virginity, as the emphasis falls here on content, and there on form, but to realize that between them they form a synthesis; or rather, for all three poets oppose a scrutiny of poetry that leads to a specious "propping up the living creation on a construction," to adumbrate the ultimate unity of their concept of song.

Patrice de la Tour du Pin's essay has an introduction by

Stephen Spender. He makes an illuminating distinction between those modern poets "who are more interested in the poetic experience to which they feel they must remain true, and those who are concerned with limiting their poetic experience in order to write aesthetically complete poems;" and he points out that "one imagines the biographic material of the lives of poets such as Claudel, Rilke and Lawrence to offer a valid addition to their poetry" but that "one does not feel this with Eliot, Valéry and George, because it seems obvious that their poetry is in their poems and not in their lives."

On the other hand, a distinguished art-critic, and avowed classicist, seemed to suggest lately that to understand *any* work of art—as distinct from one's immediate, subjective and quite unimportant reactions—a knowledge of the artist's psychological background was required, to see his creation in the round.

The major part of biography is useless for this purpose, but the letters of Keats, Van Gogh and Rilke, and the diaries of Gauguin—to mention a few, and all these romantics—are certainly invaluable commentaries on their work.

The essays by Valéry and la Tour du Pin are concerned mainly with their idea of the meaning and function of poetry, and while it would be difficult to exhaust their meaning as regards life as well as art, they form as lucid an explanation as can be made, and are further, extraordinarily self-revealing.

Both poets for their definitions seek to transmute their terms: la Tour du Pin, because his emphasis is content-form, thinks of poetry as a life, a dedicated life to be lived in, and apart from, the world. A hasty reading of his text might cause some hostility, or restiveness at least, at the seeming occasional self-esteem, the cloistral atmosphere, the piety, but this facile interpretation would be stupidly at fault. To him, for long a prisoner in Germany and badly wounded in this last war, apply Charles Morgan's words: "To be a prisoner is to be beyond the notice of men. Though it close doors, it may open windows." It is not alone his being a Roman Catholic that explains "the cloister of singers," the heading: "For Sister Phylis of the Virgin." He has transformed the severities into joy, the walls into freedom—and his metaphors are

* "The Dedicated Life in Poetry" by Patrice de la Tour du Pin. (The Harvill Press, Ltd.)

† "Essays on Language and Literature," by Proust, Valéry, Sartre, Paulhan, Ponge and Parain. (Allan Wingate, Ltd.)

the retelling of his own legend, his own experiences. Valéry takes his analogies from music, dancing, machines, science, the pendulum. Contrasting the sound of music with noise, he talks of the way "the structure can be controlled, unified and reduced to a system." Again he shows the parallel of Prose and Poetry with Walking and Dancing, and sees in them an analogy of structure. This emphasis on form is, of course, a conscious process: "I am inclined, personally, to pay much more attention to the formulation and composition of a work of art than to the work itself, and it is my habit, which amounts almost to a mania, to appreciate such works only in terms of the activity that produces them."

To consider the differences more fully: la Tour du Pin looks at a world filled with non-singers and when he asks himself the reason for their silence, he feels that they live at the periphery of their lives, not at the centre. The centre then must be cherished, and life consecrated to the tending of its flame.

He says little, perhaps, of technique—though he points to the infinite task of perfecting one's craft—for in a special way language is for him a living substance; and this necessity of being "surrounded by the living word" recalls St. John's account of the Word made flesh. To him the poet, the song-maker, is one "whose natural function is the song, that is, whose chief self-manifestation upon this earth consists in imprinting (his) character upon words to which (he) has given life;" and poetry must arouse in others a sense of their own mystery—"the poetry which does not attempt to solve this mystery nevertheless ventures forth into the knowledge of it by making it the soul of a body of expression;" and he insists that a poem is not only brought into being for its own sake but that it is a world to which its creator has given life.

For him the impulse to song is Joy; but he is careful to show that the joy of which he speaks is not an emotional state, but a spiritual quality. It must be a living force, creative, transformative, informing experience, the ultimate expression of one's most intense and highest activity; a state too, of communion with the world. By it one judges one's subjective life; in it all can be unified. He builds on freedom, "the freedom which bursts through time," not on "the liberty which trails at time's heels." And even as one dimension of freedom "opens immediately upon Joy, the other descends slowly and unfailingly towards Death"—but even there Joy can be found. Always la Tour du Pin returns to this theme: "Joy must take on adequately the flesh of time,"

it must transform all sufferings, it must sing for all who cannot or dare not sing, for "does not the process of making oneself perfect consist in transforming suffering into joy, rather than in simple resignation?"

A poem is a universe, bounded by its beginning and end, and yet with other dimensions, prolongations that cannot be measured and that vary with the inner lives of those who share it. It must be viable for whatever the limits of the poetic impulse yet this inner motion "runs over these limits into the general body of expression which it excites; and that is the indivisible and animated poem." And therefore the Sum of one's poetry must be organic: the component elements "overflow from words like a radiation, moving out to touch our most subtle as well as our grossest senses, in this resembling a human presence."

This dedicated life—with conduct and work in creative union—must be finely balanced: solitude and communion, liberty expressed in the inner life and in time, themes taken as much for life as for art, contemplation and craftsmanship, mystery and the revealing of one's darkness, silence and the word, serving the same end; and ever the understanding turned to creation "without enclosing it in formulas."

This plea to give life and yet more life to Joy is related to two of la Tour du Pin's most important concepts: "virginity" and "bodily grasp." Virginity he sees as an exploration of the soul and of the world as if always were needed "a new act of understanding." And yet this genesis, this perpetual act of creation, has not a desert for its *mise en scène*—though the song of the desert has its part in poetry. Without virginity there can be no bodily grasp, no taking on of flesh, no incarnation in others, no being "made one in poetry." But everything must "rise with its own sap" and penetration must not mean giving to the earth one's own rhythms.

Valéry considers language not as a living substance in which he takes his stand, but as his material—and a material, moreover, that has already been shaped, mauled, dulled by others. Fastidiously he looks at it—and would despair but for his determination to begin at the beginning. This he calls "cleansing the verbal situation;" and as he contemplates the process, lifting a word here and there, he realizes that Time and Life, and all these words shifting so lightly from hand to hand, become when thus held "an enigma, an abyss, a source of mental torment." He likens them

to a slender plank laid across a crevass that "will carry a man *provided* he does not loiter." "Consult your own experience and you will find that we understand others, that we understand *ourselves*, by not *dwelling on our words*." Virginity is, therefore, a necessary concept for both poets, but where la Tour du Pin regards it as the source of all incarnational creative content, Valéry sees in it the analytic, rational and, to some extent, formative power—to be used on those problems of which he has a *living sense*.

Valéry makes in his essay no definite reference to the mystical centre of being, but when he turns his gaze in upon himself and his experiences, what he sees "*is life itself in a moment of astonishment*." In "the reactions of the life within us"—corresponding to la Tour du Pin's inner motions—lie the "necessity of *our* vision of the truth." Here are to be found those poetic states, some of which are fulfilled as poems.

One must distinguish here: the vision for la Tour du Pin leads to the search for God, though one must never believe one has found Him; for Valéry it is rather, as in his "*L'Âme et la danse*," the flame itself, the desperate leaps of the body out of its form.

A poem is not so much content—in la Tour du Pin's sense of a universe—as the externalization of poetry's potentiality. A form appears, but its appearance is accidental. This accident does not, however, contradict his belief that "spiritual energy of a highly specialized kind is always at work in the poet, manifesting itself in him, and revealing him to himself in certain brief moments which are of infinite significance. Infinite for him, that is . . ." Perhaps Valéry's nearest approach—at least in this essay—to Joy, is in the actual presence of poetic emotion. Everything then becomes "musicalized." But he clearly distinguishes between the general poetic emotion and its action—a poem. Indeed there is here, in contra-distinction to the dedicated life, the statement: "experience teaches me that the same 'I' has many different aspects, and may be both abstract thinker and poet, turn and turn about, as a result of successive specializations each one of which involves a cutting off of his consciousness from the condition in which it is available for use in, and is superficially adapted to, the external world, or, in other words, from that average, undifferentiated state of mind which serves for the traffic of every day." And yet it is at this same point in his discussion of the "wholly irregular, inconstant, involuntary and fragile" poetic awareness, that one sees how both poets define the poet's function in similar terms.

La Tour du Pin says that poetry must excite in others a sense of their own mystery, that the significance of the poetic plane is as a basis for the knowledge of man. And for Valéry the main function of a poet is not the private experience of the poetic state, but "to induce that state in others." The reader "seeks and finds in us the miraculous cause of his sense of wonder." Or, as he says later : "A poem is designed expressly to be reborn from its ashes, to become once more, and indefinitely, what it has just succeeded in being. The distinguishing mark of poetry lies in its inherent property of being able to reproduce itself within the form of its structure. It stimulates us to reconstitute its identity."

But again there is preoccupation with language, for : "A poem is a form of speech quite different from other forms of speech. It obeys a bizarre discipline and responds to no necessity *unless it be the necessity created by itself*. Poetry is a "*language within a language*." He contrasts language used for practical or abstract ends, and shows how its physical aspect, "the very *act* of communication, does not maintain itself. It cannot survive the phase of comprehension, but dissolves in the ensuing clarity of mental response." But where the form is desired for its own sake—as in poetry—"we find ourselves living, breathing and thinking according to a discipline, and under the influence of laws which have nothing to do with practical ends."

La Tour du Pin in considering the difficulties that confront the poet is concerned with inner states of being, whereas Valéry conceives the task to be that of dealing with an impure material, of mastering the whole complexity of formal presentation : metrical, prosodical and so on, besides intellectual and aesthetic content. What is attributed to Inspiration, in fact, is often "a great deal more than Inspiration can provide." It is interesting to note that one of La Tour du Pin's few references to form is to see it as a necessary distortion "because, when we are putting something in an expressive way, words must have more singularity, they must strike more vividly on the sense ; and you cannot invent words, nor transgress at your pleasure the laws of language."

Both poets answer a criticism : La Tour du Pin is concerned with those who would keep apart poetry and the discovery of spiritual truth, and he urges : "You are not parts of a dialectic in which opposites may be united, but living men who can contain opposites." Valéry argues against the contrasting of Poetry and Abstract Thought. For him, a poet has a philosophy—if he were

but a poët, he could not be a complete poet—and he regards poetry as being a symmetry between form and substance, sound and sense—as opposed to prose which “insists upon an *inequality* between the various constituents of language.”

This idea of symmetry corresponds, in some degree, to that of bodily grasp. It is true that to la Tour du Pin the latter includes contemplation and a psychic chameleon adaptability, whereas Valéry is more concerned with the possible relationship between muscular activity and the mental and emotional images and judgments; but from personal experience, he knows that bodily rhythms can reach his consciousness so that in some way they are part of the stimulus to creative energy, and collaborate in the form that energy takes. The analogy of structure between Dancing and Poetry, and “the creation and maintenance in a mood of exaltation, of a certain state,” the medium of measured movement, the discipline, imply in the case of poetry this exquisite congruity of sound and sense. The body—this One that would play at All, as Socrates speaks of it in *L’Ame et la Danse*—is therefore fundamental to his concept; and while the inherent distinction is obvious as regards use—content against form—yet the end is the same: the exploration and completest possible expression of poetry.

Where then for la Tour du Pin virginity and bodily grasp itself can be thought of as spiritual states and essential for the poetry that is to be a communion with men and a search for God, and for Valéry represent rather the creator’s attitude to his material, the required tactile approach: for Francis Ponge they are his means of exploring the external world. He is not concerned with the cleansing of the verbal process; instead he faces the tremendous fact that “on any given subject not only has everything not been said, but that almost everything remains to be said.”

For all the centuries of man’s existence on this earth, he has but vaguely known the surface of things, has been content with an incredibly meagre list of qualities to describe himself, his fellow-men, and the objects around him. He has been content with “the narrow track around which speech, the human mind, in fact the essential human reality, has coursed for centuries past.”

Ponge’s determination, therefore, is to throw away this handful of intellectual dust. He has a vision of men renewing themselves and progressing “not only in thought but in faculty, in

feeling, in experience, and in short to increasing the *number of their faculties*." He says :—

"For myself I should like to make clear that I am quite different from this, and that, for example, apart from all the qualities which I possess in common with the rat, the lion, and the net, I lay claim to those of the diamond ; and, further, I am one with the sea quite as much as with the cliff that attacks and with the pebble which is thereafter created by it . . . and all this without estimating beforehand all the qualities of which I fully expect the contemplation and naming of extremely different objects will make me aware and cause me effectively to enjoy thereafter."

And he defines bodily grasp : "Against all desire for escape we must set contemplation and its resources. It is useless to run away ; we must transfer ourselves to things which overload us with new impressions and lay before us a thousand untold qualities."

Now the reader of these three essays might perhaps, while appreciating the beauty of the dedicated life, and aware from his own experience of the snare and incomprehensibility of words, feel that, however wonderful the prospect, the discipline Ponge would impose is too severe for human flesh and the easily-wearied mind. Ponge himself admits :

"What would seem to others the least complicated sights, as for instance the face of a man about to speak, or of a man who is sleeping, or any manifestation of activity in a living creature, still seem to me much too difficult and loaded with untold significance (to be discovered, then to be consolidated dialectically) for me to be able to think of attaching myself to them for a long time. And this being so, how shall I be able to describe a scene or to make a criticism of a play or a work of art ? I have no opinion on these things, being unable to gain even the slightest impression of them which is in the least accurate or complete."

What then of criticism, or even the small change of conversation ? And this overwhelming invasion of ourselves, even had we the long hours of hermits in the loneliest of deserts ? He, however, refuses to admit this invasion as an ill, provided that one maintains a sense of proportion, exerts the utmost precision in *naming* the qualities to be discovered, and is sufficiently controlled not to allow these qualities to "transport him beyond the limits of reasonable and accurate expression."

As la Tour du Pin desires an organic Sum of poetry, so he wants, not to create poems, "but *one* single cosmogony." He too sees the importance of contemplation, but for him it is the contemplation of precise objects that is a "privileged repose like the continual repose of mature plants laden with fruit." It is obvious that for him too virginity and bodily grasp are of immense importance—just as it is obvious that where Valéry would blaze the trail afresh where concepts are concerned, he would begin at the beginning with the objects of perception; and that his attitude to language is the joyful: "O infinite resources of the depth of things *rendered* by the infinite resources of the semantic depth of words!" Though he adds the qualification that he doubts the simple expression, and does not believe in an absolute language.

Again, he distrusts the mysticism that vindicates the poet's function. "I propose to every man the opening of trapdoors in his inner self, a journey into the depth of things, an invasion of qualities, a revolution or an upheaval comparable to that effected by the plough or the spade when suddenly, and for the first time, millions of particles, grains, roots, worms, and minute animals, until then buried, are brought to light." The revelation is not of the soul's journey to God, but of the infinite qualities to be discovered in the objects of sense perception.

Necessarily only an outline could be attempted here of these differences of emphasis and different concepts, and of many of the qualifications implied or expressed by the three poets, but it is perhaps possible to see that whether form, mystical content or phenomenological content have the major stress, each conceives it as his task to "remake Genesis." And while Ponge might modify or at least hesitate at Valéry's enunciation of the iron law of literature: "*What is of value to one person only, is devoid of value,*" the concluding words of Valéry's essay express the purpose of all three:

"... we must evoke a pure and ideal Voice capable of communicating, without weakness, without apparent effort, without offending the ear and without breaking that sphere of the poetic universe which has been created in a moment of time—an idea which shall express a *self* that is miraculously superior to *Me*."

DRAMATIC COMMENTARY

By A. J. Leventhal

THE PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD. By J. M. Synge. Abbey Theatre.
THE GREAT MAGICIAN. By Don Pedro Calderon de la Barca. Gate Theatre.
TANKARDSTOWN, or A LOT TO BE THANKFUL FOR. By Christine Longford. Gate Theatre.

Although the local Press rarely carries an irate letter nowadays concerning the decay of the Abbey Theatre, and even though the voice of the orator is stilled in the debating halls of literary groups, despite also the lull in editorial or columnist comment on this subject, this silence in no wise means that the thoughtful members of the theatre-going public accept the present situation as an ideal one. Yet, if the *Sturm* has calmed down the *Drang* in the auditorium is even more insistent than ever. No visitor deems his holiday complete without having assisted at an Abbey performance. Since I last wrote about the state of drama at Ireland's National Theatre the directors have taken the obvious step suggested in this Commentary, and made Miss Ria Mooney producer. The first important production since her appointment was *The Playboy of the Western World*, and here was a challenge to those critical members of the audience with their inevitable memories of the triumphs of the actors in the golden age of Sara Allgood, F. J. McCormick, Barry Fitzgerald, J. M. Kerrigan, Fred O'Donovan (to mention only a few of the old-time interpreters of the Anglo-Irish drama revival).

Not unnaturally, the expressed views of the critics varied. Some were mildly pleased and others were horrified. Actually there seemed to the present writer to be very little difference in interpretation or presentation from the production of this play to which we have been accustomed over many years. There was, of course, the difference occasioned by the individuality of the actors. Why should one expect the elocution of W. G. Fay, the glamour of Fred O'Donovan, the intelligence of Arthur Shields, the whimsy of Cyril Cusack—a noble line of Christopher Mahons—to be reproduced either wholly or in part by the new interpretation of Micheal O hAonghusa? W. G. Fay claimed that Synge himself helped him to build up the rhythm of the speeches and gave them a kind of lilt which the playwright considered the lines required. Mr. Arnold Ussher has urged that records should be made of spoken Irish before the native speakers die out. This is understandable as an effort to keep alive the authentic sounds and idioms of a moribund language that is being murdered by a host of new speakers brought up on a Sassenach accent and mode of thought. This, however, does not apply to the language spoken by Synge's characters which, if artificial to many ears, yet is as the author claims "as fully flavoured as a nut or apple," and represents the natural poetry of the people whose words he took down.

Indeed, if records had been made of the original production of Synge's and Yeats's plays, just as photographs of the sets were made, these might have had historic value. Their value, however, would have remained academic. An accurate, phonetic, Elizabethan rendering of Shakespeare would only titillate the curious and excite the scholar, throwing light on linguistic development. Language and pronunciation by their very life must move with time and rhythm

—in prose at any rate—must change with the new stresses and accentuation that living languages develop from generation to generation. To fix a dramatic production in its earliest form—authorized though it be by its creator—means in the end its fossilisation. It would become an archaeological piece, an unread classic restricted to the gloss and *post-mortem* of the classroom.

Micheal O hAonghusa's Christy Mahon was an acceptable individual interpretation. It had confidence and a winning, soft sincerity. He really looked as if he had slept in ditches when he made his first appearance. He played his part naturally and without the self-consciousness of an actor who has had his long-desired ambition to play the rôle of Hamlet suddenly thrust upon him. He was just sufficiently unheroic to attain the pseudo-heroism of the spoiled parricide and rose to a superb virility in the last act. Brid Ni Loinsigh, as Pegeen Mike, was more convincing as a termagant than in the lyrical passages. Harry Brogan's droll deliberation, drunk or sober, made Micheal James Flaherty an entertaining personality, whilst Brian O'Higgins's clipped speech in the part of Old Mahon recalled the mannerisms of Arthur Sinclair—a worthy model for the potential comedian but dangerous for serious parts.

Eileen Crowe's Widow Quinn was archly wily—a plumed serpent. But the plumes looked all too borrowed. And here it must be said that Sean Keating's designs for the costumes which are now regularly used in Abbey productions of *The Playboy* are definitely a mistake. Synge in his preface to the play says that: "in the happy ages of literature, striking and beautiful phrases were as ready to the story-teller's or the playwright's hand, as the rich cloaks and dresses of his time." It does not follow that brocade must further enhance the sparkle of the jewelled word, particularly when the setting is a country shebeen. The realism of the male clothes served only to make the studied design of the women's garments all the more fantastic. Excellent for ballet—if our somnolent choreographers ever decide to use this play for the purpose—they are incongruous in the dramatic production, giving an air of unreality to a play which is based on a psychology as sound and as universal as its regional poetry.

Love laughed at locksmiths long before the anonymous coiner of the phrase thought fit to give it currency, and Lord Longford has learned to laugh at any barriers language may erect to shut him out from his passion for what is great in literature. We are not here concerned with his versions in English of early Gaelic poetry lately published, but time and again we have dealt with productions from his pen of translations from the French and the Greek which have been put on the stage of the Gate Theatre. His latest achievement is a translation from the Spanish of Calderon. He has in this case made good an omission by Denis Florence MacCarthy, who did so much to make the great Spanish dramatist known to English speaking people. MacCarthy was a little overawed by the fact that Shelley had tried his hand at translating excerpts from *El Magico Prodigioso*, and to MacCarthy Shelley was a poet (this side idolatry) with whom to compete would be mortal presumption, although in his time *imitation* was inevitable. Even his contemporary, Edward Fitzgerald, and likewise a translator of Calderon, did not dare undertake this task. It had been done earlier by two bolder men who knew little Spanish, and in one case, just 100 years ago, the translator was so afraid of shocking the public by the original title with its diabolic implication that he changed it to *Justina*.

Judged from its presentation at the Gate Theatre, Lord Longford's courageous experiment seemed eminently successful. The harmony of Calderon's verse was, of necessity, lacking in its English form, but the fidelity to the original text was manifest in an exactness that did not hesitate to reproduce in English a Spanish pun. The action of *The Great Magician* takes place in Antioch in the 3rd century of the Christian era. It is one of the best known of Calderon's religious dramas. Despite its pagan setting the characters are as Spanish as those of Elizabethan dramas in a foreign setting are English. Thus the Spanish costumes were abundantly justified and hardly required the apology in the programme.

The play with its Demon who is called up by Cyprian, a scholar, to help him to win the heart of Justina, inevitably makes for confusion with Goethe's *Faust*. The German dramatist, however, could owe little to Calderon. The Demon is without individuality and has a *penchant* for theological argument which Mephistopheles in his sly cynical irony would have scorned as a vehicle for temptation. Maurice O'Brien gave this rôle far more than the text provided. Cyprian, likewise, as conceived by Calderon, has none of the Faustian weariness brought about by disillusion and a consciousness of the inadequacy of human knowledge; he would never have dreamed of renewing an earlier acquaintance with the Demon if he had not by chance fallen head over heels in love with Justina. Christopher Casson appeared to have the Faust parallel in mind for he played Cyprian as a much older and wearier man than the text required. This actor, however, made up in sincerity and clarity for what was lacking in youthful credible passion. Eve Watkinson did her best with the unavoidably wooden Justina, whose virtue neither the pleading of Cyprian nor demoniac force could shake, supported as it was by divine grace and free will (in those days one pointed theological morals). So poor Cyprian had to be content with an illusion of his beloved, tricked out by the devil, which, on closer examination, turned out to be a skeleton—an awful skull that propounded a dictum of the vanity of human wishes:

“ Asi, Cipriano, son
todas las glorias del mundo.”

The play ends with the Christian martyrdom of both Justina and Cyprian, the latter having defeated the Demon and cheated him of his pledged soul by a timely conversion.

John Izon brightened this sombre piece by the liveliness of the production.

In much lighter vein was *Tankardstown*, which Lady Longford let loose on a holiday audience and which understandably ran for weeks. At first it seemed that Lady Longford had set out to satirize the vicissitudes of a country town. She certainly allowed a cynical humour to play dexterously on small-town Irish life, and the first act had punch and verve with its critical observations, political jibes as well as technical skill. Unfortunately she was not able to sustain this flight of irony. The humour degenerated into what was almost farce, and technically the play fizzled out into the development of a situation which could only have maintained its interest by preserving the original brilliance of the dialogue.

Here was a piece that called for enthusiastic acting and the playwright was well served by the whole caste. In such general competence it would be unfair to single out individual performances, but Milo O'Shea, as Sean Murphy, a civil servant, because the character was an excellently drawn one, and because

he interpreted it with meticulous, ingenuous comedy, was unforgettable. The two English visitors, Ferdinand Bull and Pandora Legge, were ably caricatured by Aiden Grennell and Gervaise Mathews, and it was a pity they were lost by the author in the froth of the later ebullient antics of the denizens of Tankards-town.

As, I hope, a not irrelevant footnote to this Commentary, may I thank the Gate Theatre Company for repairing an omission referred to here a little time ago—*viz.*, the insertion of dates in their programmes. This will certainly be appreciated by future students of drama in this country.

Art Notes

By Edward Sheehy.

IRISH EXHIBITION OF LIVING ART. The National College of Art.

DRAWINGS BY MOYSEY. Victor Waddington Galleries.

DRAWINGS OF DUBLIN. By Patrick Hall. Victor Waddington Galleries.

The Living Art Exhibition has become an institution and is to-day a far more important artistic event than the Academy. Its opening has even all the social *éclat* of an Academy opening, whatever significance that may have. The present exhibition, apart even from a considerable number of pictures from the Bomford Collection, is still an advance on previous years. Approaches to the problems of paint are no less diverse; but there is less of the uncertain and experimental in the use of the various idioms. Unlike the Academy, which harbours an occasional *fauve* among its social beautifiers and half-hearted Impressionists, at this exhibition even the failures are interesting in so far as they are at least attempting something new.

The selection from the Bomford Collection included a number of pictures which were quite well worth a visit for their own sakes: two lovely Renoirs, *Girl in Red* and *Girl in Blue*; a superb Roualt, *Clown's Head*, beautiful in colour and intense in feeling; a typical and delicately painted Modigliani portrait, *Madame Zborowski*; an early *Still Life* by André Derain; Vuillard's *Interior*, delicate and lovely but hardly representative of his best work; a Manet portrait *Madame Manet in the Conservatory*, though its ascription is, I believe, disputed; an early, delightful but again hardly typical self-portrait by Degas. I was disappointed with Daumier's *Carnival* which lacks the satiric bite we associate with that painter; on the other hand I like his small, polished and dramatic *Saved*. I saw Clavé's *Girl with Cockerel* with mixed feelings, finding it hard to reconcile the cold violence of the colour with the delicacy of the subject.

The Irish exhibits stood up well to the trying juxtaposition with the masters. Louis le Brocquy's *The Fearful World*, which was the title-piece of his recent exhibition in London, I found disappointing for several reasons. Both the subject and several formal echoes inevitably invite comparison between it and Picasso's *Guernica*, out of which it comes badly. Picasso's human and animal fragments, individually strained and distorted with agony, still combine between balanced planes to make a picture which has the terror of classical tragedy, perhaps because the distortion is formalised. Le Brocquy's distortion is too near to caricature for his title and his colour too decoratively subtle for the

obvious intention of the picture. The failure, I suggest, is one of aiming outside and beyond his emotional scope, for his *Man Creating a Bird* is a beautiful picture, a gay and lively arabesque both in colour and cubist-flavoured composition. For the same reasons I liked his *In Fear Of Cain*, though here again I could hardly feel the title borne out by the picture. Two small pictures, on gold leaf and aluminium leaf respectively, are to me merely affected dilettantism.

Thurloe Connolly is predominantly interested in the surface texture of his pictures and so little in colour that practically all his recent work is almost monochromatic. Frequently the surface is so worked through successive stages that the canvas has the patina of weathered age. Apart from finely-composed though Piperesque *Reconstruction of a Ruined House* he shows a classical and rather austere individuality in *Man with Draughts Board* and *Ptarmigan*.

Nick Nicholls, descending from the rarefied heights of pure abstraction, shows himself a painter with a forceful economy of expression on canvas, even if not in the right-hand column of the catalogue. In *Mother and Son* and *Boy with Milk Jug* the composition in heavy black line is relieved by the fresh and subtle pastel tones of figures and background; their chief beauty, however, lies in the inevitability of his line.

Rev. J. P. Hanlon has two pictures, *Flower Market* and *In the Kitchen* which, in their tropically brilliant colour and nicely varied texture of surface, are far more interesting than any of his work I have previously seen. Though still light and gay they show both an increased maturity and an added technical sureness. Daniel O'Neill's *Donegal*, derives about equally from realism and surrealism to make a beautifully expressive landscape which, for all its subtle observation of detail, has a dream-like quality in its clean and restrained colour. *The Mirror*, obviously from the same palette, is still more a work of the imagination, quietly and restrainedly realised in simple form and harmoniously subdued colour. A year ago I expressed the fear that this painter would suffer from his facility to produce sentimentally decorative and easily popular pictures. The two pictures above show that he has completely overcome any such temporary lapse. Norah McGuinness's best picture here, and indeed the best of hers I have seen for some years, is *Convent Garden*, a picture of life and colour and movement, qualities too frequently lacking in her often rigid and over-emphatic compositions. Evie Hone's chief work as a designer of stained glass is very evident in the balanced skeletal structure of her pictures. I particularly liked her *Village near Assisi* and *Square, Arezzo*, while at the same time wishing that she would sometimes enliven her somewhat monotonous uniformity of tone. Anne Yeats has an impressive piece of work in *Acheron*, a richly sombre picture in pastels over wash. I also liked the modified abstraction of her *Fallen Masonry*. Joan Jameson's forceful and dramatic *Nude* and her equally forceful and decorative *Red Lilies* show her a painter of courage and distinction. Her *Still Life* where the emphasis is on the colour rather than the form is not so successful. While not usually a devotee of the abstract I must confess the keen pleasure I got from Neville Johnson's *Captive*, a piece of wonderfully subtle harmony in glowing reds and browns. Two pictures, by painters hitherto unknown to me, deserve special mention. Strangely they might both have been conceived in the same mood and been created by the same brush, so like are they in feeling and technique. They are *Back Gardens under Snow* by George

Wallace and *City Pattern* by Olive Henry. In both, undistinguished everyday buildings are used to create balanced patterns in colour suggestive of Brueghel.

Mr. Moysey's drawings in coloured chalks are nearly all slight, frequently too sketchy and sometimes, especially in the landscapes, completely lacking in point. Most of them have the appearance of rough and rapid notes. On the other hand, particularly in figure drawings such as *In the Pub I, Hop Picking VII* or *Hoeing*, there is a suggestion of first-hand and accurate observation comparable with, though in a lighter vein than that of the earlier Van Gogh. *Charwoman*, the most fully realised, I liked best of his thirty-four sketches.

Patrick Hall is an accomplished architectural draughtsman who invariably produces an accurate record of his subject in delicate line and wash. While his work consists largely in plain, unvarnished statement, he can occasionally capture the atmosphere of the place, as he does in *Morning on the Quay, Cork*, or *The Rotunda, Dublin*. With a little more depth he might claim the place of a modern Malton.

BOOK REVIEWS

A STAGE FOR POETRY. By Gordon Bottomley. With Appendices by Marjorie I. M. Gullan and Constance M. Herbert. Titus Tilsen and Son, Kendal. £5 5s.

The modern revival of verse drama owes much to the experiments and constant example of Gordon Bottomley, and this new volume will be of practical value to all interested in the subject. In it the dramatist discusses the problems of verse drama in our time, describes productions of his own plays and the experiences which gradually led him to abandon 'the picture frame' stage of the past. This elaborate volume is delightfully produced and contains more than a hundred plates, eleven of them in colour. Many well-known artists have designed costumes and sets for the plays of Gordon Bottomley, including the late Paul Nash, Edmund Dulac, W. Graham Robertson, R.B.A., and John Duncan, R.S.A. It is interesting to compare the earlier designs in this book with the later ones. There is a steady development towards imaginative simplicity. For his later plays the poet-dramatist has preferred to depend on curtain backgrounds, steps and levels and the effect of grouping.

When Yeats broke away from the Victorian convention of blank-verse dramas in five acts and discovered for himself the value of brevity and of lyric speech, his aim was too modest to attract attention in England, where producers and dramatists still dreamed of a poetic re-conquest. Gordon Bottomley's first play, *The Crier by Night*, brief and lyrical, followed the Irish experiment, and was first produced in the United States. But in 1915 his play, *King Lear's Wife*, attracted wide attention and may be regarded as a definite turning point. An English poet, for the first time, had deliberately broken with the academic tradition of verse drama in the Shakespearean manner and, to emphasise his intentions, had chosen a Shakespearean theme. Powerful in its action, unsparing in its realism, the play also offered a contrast to the remote idealism

of Yeats's plays. There is no doubt that Yeats and others in the early days of the revival reacted too much from the restless stage-movement and bustle of ordinary drama and, in recent years, the first problem in the development of Irish verse drama has been that of action. As Dr. Gordon Bottomley points out,

They went to the opposite extreme of stillness, trying to match the different stillness which poetry creates in the minds of speaker and listener: the result was a visible monotony that bored the listener's eyes, and gave his untrained ears more work than they had been accustomed to; and he blamed the poetry.

King Lear's Wife was first produced by the late John Drinkwater at the Birmingham Repertory Theatre, but it was not seen here until 1941, when it was produced at the Peacock Theatre by Ria Mooney for the Dublin Verse Speaking Society.

As all his plays show, Gordon Bottomley is instinctively a dramatist as well as a poet, a combination that is rare. His remarks on the speaking of dramatic verse are always practical and to the point. The failure of Yeats to establish a strong tradition of verse drama in the Abbey was due partly to the dramatic limitations of his own work, partly to the fact that he only put on his own plays, and to the constant tendency towards lyrical monotone.

The vocalization inherent in song is only slightly useful in spoken poetry. A continuous mellifluous fluting is possible in the utterance of verse, and a too faithful reliance on that may have helped to bring poetic drama into disfavour. An unpleasant monotony results when speakers thus play tunes on their voices; but, beyond that, the method prevents beauty of tone from becoming expressive tone—which is still more serious. Speech only reaches its characteristic music by being expressive; and particularly so in verse, where metrical irregularity and regularity enlarge its possibilities—and even discord can contribute when its nature is understood. One of Sarah Bernhardt's greatest English friends arrived in her studio one morning, to find her practising *L'Építaphe Villon*. He asked "Why on earth are you working on that dreadful thing?" She replied "Because it contains every ugly sound in the French language." In that reply lay, I firmly believe, the secret of the supreme beauty of her stage-diction.

When Yeats wrote his Dance Plays, he abandoned the Abbey stage for the Dublin drawingroom; unfortunately the Dublin drawingroom itself was rapidly disappearing. But these symbolical and evocative playlets, based on Japanese hieratic tradition, proved an incentive to himself and others. It is regrettable, however, that the device of the Curtain-Folding, devised by Yeats, cannot be used when these Dance plays are brought back to a theatre such as the Abbey. As Dr. Gordon Bottomley points out, the audience in circle or balcony can see over the curtain and it is no longer a concealment. Simultaneously with Yeats, Gordon Bottomley and the Poet Laureate were attempting to rescue verse drama from the picture-frame proscenium, while in Scotland the experiments of Marjorie Gullan and Duncan Clark in unison speaking made possible the re-use of the ancient convention of dramatic chorus. At Boar's Hill the Poet Laureate had a small theatre with a stage constructed to some extent after the Elizabethan

model. Dr. Gordon Bottomley gives us his own ideal of a poetic stage and, as a practical dramatist, he provides us with the actual plans: these have been drawn by T. Rayson, F.R.I.B.A., who designed the small theatre at Boar's Hill. In these plans the conventional proscenium is abandoned: broad steps lead from the auditorium to the fore stage, there is an upper stage or level, and balcony rather like a musicians' gallery. There are several sets of traverse curtains and what may be described as a canopy for overhead lighting. The advantage of such a stage is that a special theatre building is not required and without too much expense a concert hall could be used for the purpose. Unfortunately, in these days of commerce, even such a simple stage must remain an ideal. Inspired by the possibility of simple imaginative production, Gordon Bottomley, in his later plays, has developed a technique of his own. The technique of most of these plays, if one can use a contradictory expression, may be described as narrative-drama. A typical example is *The Bower of Wandel*, which the Dublin Verse Speaking Society produced at the Peacock Theatre in 1940. There is an exciting description of a performance of *The Woman from the Voe*, which was arranged by the well-known American producer, Ellen van Volkenburg, at Dartington Hall. At that time there was no theatre among the Dartington buildings but only an immense Dance-School with a level floor and a battery of lights among the girders of its roof. At about one-third of the length of this hall an open stage was built at three levels. The illumination was confined to this area, with the important result that the many feet of floor at the rear of the stage, when left in darkness, was utterly invisible to the audience on the other side of the lighted area. "This darkness had all the quality of an impenetrable curtain, along with suggestions of a mysterious, spiritual texture, invisible yet existent, that could be parted at any point convenient to a player." The accompanying illustration shows how effective this method was: the seal women in the play emerging from the hidden ocean into moonlight.

This book is expensive but it is to be hoped that some of our libraries will acquire it. It is scarcely necessary to say that it is of particular interest to our younger stage designers.

A. C.

RABELAIS. His Life, the Story Told by Him. Selections Therefrom Here Newly Translated, and an Interpretation of His Genius and His Religion. By John Cowper Powys. John Lane. Price: 15/-.

John Cowper Powys in an essay called 'My Philosophy' wrote: "The whole vast planetary experience of the human race is in our separate, solitary mind." It is in terms such as this that he conceives Rabelais' work.

The first part is a scholarly account of Rabelais' life. More than that, we see how Mr. Powys has received into his own hands the whole weight and drag of this sea-changing narrative. There is, for example, his description of Pantagruel's Paris-lodging, of Rabelais' "deep ancestral reciprocity with the grosser, darker, homelier, more plebeian ways and habitations of his childhood," and his pondering of the latter's possible reactions to the Sorbonnists:

"Did he picture them as they nodded their skull-capped heads, and wagged their shaven chins or 'their great buggery beards,' and pointed with gleaming eyes and a viper's nest of index-fingers at the heretical word

in the volume under examination, and thought of its writer confessing under 'peine dure' that with deliberate intent and not by accident his printer had printed *âne*, 'ass,' for *âme*, 'soul'? Did he picture them setting themselves to hang like bats to the great Clock of Time, if so be that they might arrest its movement?"

He sees the beginning of the "huge Pantagruelian *Tetralogy*, of which the Fourth Book is the Satyric Dance at the end and the closing of the lid of the Silenus Casket of its choreographer" in Rabelais' passion for "rural humours and seaport humours" and for adventure. His own interpretation of the Rabelaisian pattern and its shadows is to be found in his discussion of Rabelais' "curious mania for larch-trees" and "his mystical and metaphysical feeling for *Cannabis Sativa*, or Hemp"; the subject-matter of the Third Book of *Pantagruel*: "in the first place a revival of the old undying Tiraqueau-Bouchard debate about the equality or inequality of the sexes; and in the second place the eternally new-old topic of occult Prognostications concerning the unborn future" in Rabelais' "essential philosophy. If the spirit of life blows like the wind, he 'follows the wind.' Among all writers he is the supreme *adventurer*"; and in Rabelais' affinity with Whitman and Melville.

Part II, giving the story of the books, is an entertaining piece of work with its lively commentary served on his own philosophical platter. Those who know the comfortable handling of the occult by charlatans may at first feel some uneasiness at such sentences as:

"In it (the episode of the Disputation by Signs) there is that massive zest for sinking Artesian wells into the occult secrets of Being, which with him invariably accompanies the most extravagant fooling."

"... we must take the word *drink* in an occult and cabalistical sense, referring to the quenching of a Faustian thirst for further and further revelations of the secrets of Nature."

"... my cabalistical reading of the occult childishness of these onomatopoeic sounds!"

But elsewhere Mr. Powys has demonstrated his 'mysticism of Nature' to be in large part the enjoyment of immediate reality, animate or inanimate. Nor can one at any moment doubt his sincerity.

His own translations are generous in intention, and even those readers devoted to Urquhart will find pleasure in the thrust and gusto of this terser rendering. There is only one obvious lapse: it occurs in the drinking-scene at Gargantua's birth. "Sign on the dotted line—I mean stop when I say when."

The last part of the book is a consideration of Rabelais' genius. His humour is contrasted with that of Shakespeare, Cervantes, Dickens and Joyce; his style, inspiration, memories and characteristics are discussed. "Rabelais is the *Enfant Terrible* of the whole towering and engulfing multiverse; and as for his particular Dimension, this circular Astronomical Universe 'fretted with golden fire,' transient as a blot and transparent as a bubble, he tosses it up and down at his pleasure like a juggler's ball!" Perhaps the least satisfactory explanation is that of Rabelais' attitude to women: "it is in his personal experience that we must look for the real secret cause of this curious *lacuna* in Rabelais' emotional life; and for myself I cannot help suspecting that, like Dickens, he had a fatally-lodged grudge against the woman who gave him birth." Surely Rabelais' enormous laughter would have eventually shattered this grudge. Is there not

some further explanation in the fact that his 'earth-born humour' was more concerned with immediate sensations than with the implications and subtleties of any relationship?

Mr. Powys' belief that we are moving out of the Sign *Pisces* into that of the Sign *Aquarius*, his own attitude to politics, progress and religion, his eager approval of Rabelais' 'transference of reverence' to Life itself—all these are the facets of this interpretation. He is aware that the reader may well wonder if he is merely analysing his own reactions; and when one recalls his 'self-imposed duty' of forcing himself to enjoy the immediate objects around him—as propounded in 'My Philosophy'—it is impossible not to feel some curiosity about the recalcitrant or negligent part of him that has to be led so determinedly to the vast earthiness of Rabelais.

However that may be, Mr. Powys towards the end of his study has this to say:

"What makes the authentic work of Rabelais one of the four greatest books of the entire world, side by side with Homer and Shakespeare and *Don Quixote*, is simply—I speak metaphorically—the size.

"By size I mean the unbounded extent in all the four dimensions, that is to say, in the ordinary three and the mysterious other one, of the field of its vision. This idea of size is the first reaction in us all that the genius of Rabelais evokes. It strikes us all as something engagingly, affectionately, intellectually, humorously, honestly, hopefully, faithfully, charitably, bravely, indulgently, tolerantly, competently, and most comprehensively, big."

It is this 'feeling of immensity' that Mr. Powys has conveyed: and whether one accepts his cosmogonic interpretations or not, one finds in his book the affection, tolerance and comprehensiveness for which he commends Rabelais. The measure of this engaging and faithful account appears in the concluding words of Part I, about Rabelais' burial in St. Paul's Church at Paris:

"... there is a singular congruity in the fact that his bones were laid under the protection of the one single evangelical teacher whose words he never quoted without respect, and whose deepest *Logos*, 'charity seeketh not her own,' was engraved 'en lettres Ionique' round the Platonic image of 'humaine nature à son commencement mystic' on the golden feather-clasp of the little Gargantua's cap."

JONATHAN SWIFT: *JOURNAL TO STELLA*. Edited by Harold Williams, Oxford: At The Clarendon Press, 1948, 2 vols. Price 42s. net.

Every Swift student knows the dark-blue buckram-bound volumes of the Clarendon Press: the *Tale* (1920), the *Drapier's Letters* (1935), the *Letters of Swift to Ford* (1935), and the *Poems* (1937), which with the *Correspondence* (1910-14), *Gulliver's Travels* (First Edition Club 1926), and the *Prose Works* (1940-41, in progress) form the source-works of his studies of the great satirist. To these has now been added the *Journal to Stella*. It continues the well-established tradition: a carefully edited text, copious notes, and a scholarly introduction.

Mr. Williams is to be congratulated on his success. In his *Introduction*, after pointing to an earlier correspondence between Swift and 'the ladies,' now lost, he traces the letters from their publication by Hawkesworth (1766) and

Deane Swift (1768), through Nichols (1779 and 1801), Sheridan (1784) and Walter Scott (1814), to more modern times, Forster (1875), Ryland (1897), Aitken (1901) and Moorhead (1924). He contrasts Hawkesworth's editing with Deane Swift's, and comes to the conclusion that the latter, in spite of the liberties he took, as, for instance, the coining of the names 'Presto' and 'Stella', is more faithful to the original MSS. than the former. He points out that Nichols was the first to use the title *Journal to Stella*. He discusses a weakening of the terms of affection in part of the *Journal*, of which he gives an explanation deviating from the commonly accepted one. And *en passant* he discreetly, but quite justly, takes M. Emile Pons to task for his rash assertions and phantastical interpretations of the 'little language.'

The importance and value of the notes on the text cannot be easily over-estimated. There is hardly a page without them. The student often has occasion to get informed on the minor biographical and bibliographical details of Swift's life and works, in which case he will naturally turn to the general indexes of the works mentioned in the opening lines of this review. He will now have another valuable source in the index and the notes to the *Journal to Stella*, which must have cost Mr. Williams a great deal of time and labour.

But perhaps the most interesting, and certainly the most difficult part of the editor's task, has been the deciphering of Swift's scribble and the unriddling of his abbreviations, ciphers, and mystifications. It will be well to distinguish the latter as follows: (1) two cases in which letters have been inserted into ordinary words to hide their meaning: see 7 March 1711 (the £50 bank-bill), and 21 Feb. 1712 (the drawing up of the 'Representation'); (2) intentional abbreviations, such as 'Ld,' 'Bp,' 'Engd,' etc., of which there are a great many; (3) omissions of words, slips of the pen, slurrings, all owing to haste or carelessness; (4) alphabetical symbols; (5) the so-called 'little language.'

The two cases of groups (1) need no comment. With reference to groups (2) and (3) Mr. Williams says (p. LIX) that 'th' and 'te,' 'y' and 'yo,' 'yr' and 'yrs' have been enlarged. This is correct for 'th' and 'te,' because in reality they are not 'th' and 'te,' but 'the' written very slovenly. I have only two facsimiles at my disposal, that of Letter I in the present edition, and that of Letter XLIX in Vol. II of Temple Scott's edition of the *Prose Works*. In them are some examples of 'th' showing faint traces of slurring of the 'e,' and others of 'te' in which the upper part of 'h' is lowered and the lower part of the 'h' together with the 'e' are so badly slurred as to give to the whole the impression of 'te.' Though I have no opportunity to check it, I should not be surprised if 'yo' were another case in question. With 'y,' 'yr,' 'yrs,' however, the matter lies differently. They are intentional abbreviations, and should, therefore, to my taste, have been preserved, even at the risk of the trouble they may cause in the reading of the text.—Editors, to Mr. Williams downwards, have thought that among group (4) there is a symbol ME or Me, but this is not so. In Swift's Account-books, Nos. 505-510, for the years 1702-3, 1708-9, 1709-10, 1711-12, 1712-13, 1717-18, now in the Forster Collection, the symbol MC occurs 40 times. Six of them look like ME (that is a capital M followed by a non-capital e as tall as the capital M), owing to the fact that the final up-stroke of the M runs on into the initial up-stroke of the C. The same phenomenon may be observed (8 times) in Letters I and XLIX (see the facsimiles). But in reality all the 48 cases represent MC, so that in my

opinion ME or Me is non-existent.—Group (5) remains. The *text, function, and meaning* of the 'little language' have been carefully and critically re-examined by Mr. Williams, but he will no doubt be the first to admit that here difference of opinion may still occur. (For an excellent discussion of the 'little language' see Prof. Irvin Ehrenpreis in *Studies in Philology*, XLV, 1, Jan. 1948; and cf. occasional comments on it in Prof. J. H. Neumann's interesting articles on Swift's pronunciation, vocabulary, and spelling in *The Quarterly Journal of Speech*, April 1942, in *Modern Language Quarterly*, June 1943, and in *Studies in Philology*, Jan. 1944.) However, as regards its *origine and character* we are still in the dark. We don't know *when* it came into being. We *do* know that it cannot be an imitation of Stella's baby talk, because Stella was about eight years old when Swift saw her for the first time (see Ehrenpreis p. 80, who refers to Margaret L. Woods, and Rossi & Hone). But what was it then? Was it an imitation of the infantine prattle of another baby (perhaps Stella's little brother, born in 1688)? Or was it an imitation of the Irish dialect, of which Swift must have been thoroughly cognisant? These are questions only, hardly suggestions. Speculation on this point is doomed to be fruitless, but speculation may sometimes lead to a possible clue.

In conclusion, attention may be drawn to the illustrations, the Appendices, the important article on the *Portraits Of Stella And Vanessa* by Henry Mangan, and the useful *Index*.

H. TEERINK.

NIETZSCHE. *The Story of a Human Philosopher*. By H. A. Reyburn, in collaboration with H. E. Hinderks and J. G. Taylor. Macmillan & Co., Ltd. Price: 21s.

Professor Reyburn writes for the ordinary man with little or no philosophical knowledge, and he indicates with considerable tact and skill the essential patterns of thought and relationships: an analysis of the relevant part of Kant's philosophy, the metaphysical aspect of Schopenhauer, Nietzsche's interpretation of the pre-Socratic philosophers, the influence of Jakob Burckhardt, and so on. There is equal deftness in tracing the development of Nietzsche's thought from the whole-hearted enthusiasm for Schopenhauer and Wagner to the mounting bitterness, frustration and diseased euphoria of his last books; and there is a careful examination of the inherent flaws in Nietzsche's writings: his weak historical sense, the falsity of his sociological and other assumptions, the inner contradictions. The lucidity and lightness of touch with which all this is presented will charm even those who prefer personalities to philosophers.

Professor Reyburn states in his preface that 'in the psychological field, in which much of the study lies, technicalities and the jargon of the schools have been avoided.' This is, therefore, a straightforward account and explanation of Nietzsche in terms that will be immediately understood.

"Nietzsche's picture thus is obtained by selection, not by an intellectual compulsion arising from the facts themselves. His metaphysics and his history alike are merely vehicles of his aspirations and needs, not objective guides to his thought. The contradictions of his treatment; his insistence of a ruthless ideal, and his lament over its ruthlessness; his admiration of power and his horror of it; his contention that good

does not merely arise from evil, but incorporates it and is itself a form of evil; these all express the divisions in his own being, which, torn inwardly, so that the parts limited and restrained one another, yet could not divide itself externally and even for a time give free unimpeded range to any of its elements and find full satisfaction for any of its needs. Behind the treatment of Greek antiquity, we see the same agonised soul which we have already encountered in the analysis of the Promethean myth, a soul which has all its conflicting aspirations unfulfilled and cannot give up any of them."

"The conflicting elements of his mind and temperament, which in his actual life he could neither rid himself of nor bring into harmony, Nietzsche separated from one another in his theory and set over against one another. But they have a common home and origin. The conquering barbarian, the noble aristocrat, the melancholy recluse, the gentle and happy Jesus, the weak and vengeful Christian; they are all Nietzsche, parts of his complex nature, divided fragments of his personality."

The acumen and sympathy are considerable, but one wonders whether Nietzsche's subtle, malicious, tortured, poetic and sometimes naïve genius does not remain elusive like some dithyrambic shadowy dance round psychic focal points. One recalls his own flash of understanding: "I am so utterly devoted to independence, I sacrifice everything to it—probably because I have the most dependent soul and am more tormented by the slightest cord than others are by chains," and with it Jung's assertion: "The structure of the psyche is in fact so radically contradictory or contrapuntal that one can scarcely make any psychological statement without immediately having to state the opposite." Or Buber's profound remark: "For Nietzsche the problem of man is a problem of the *edge*, the problem of a being that has moved from within nature to its utmost edge, to the perilous end of natural being, where there begins, not as for Kant the ether of the spirit but the dizzying abyss of nothing." Perhaps a man who, the prisoner of his own projections, is possessed by visions potent and sterile that consume him as much by their beauty as by their malignity, and of which he is not the initiate, will tend to elude any examination.

Apart, however, from some minor flaws of emphasis, almost inevitable where so much ground is covered, Professor Reyburn's book is a wholly admirable introduction to Nietzsche, and balanced presentation of his work and significance. As a general study it is authoritative, conscientious and vivid, but its end should not have been at Nietzsche's graveside. There still remains the terrible climax when his power phantasies and hysterical neurosis were animated in this generation. To quote Jung again:

"Nietzsche is German to the very marrow of his bones, to the very abstruse symbolism of his madness. It is the psychopath's weakness that prompts him to play with the 'blond beast' and the 'Superman.' Needless to say the triumph of these pathological phantasies, on a scale which the world had never known before, was not due to the healthy elements in the German nation. It was the weakness, akin to Nietzsche's character which proved to be fertile soil for such hysterical phantasies . . . with the result that the people were led to imitate their prophets and to take them literally, but not to understand them."

SHAKESPEARE'S PRODUCING HAND. A Study of his Marks of Expression to be found in the First Folio. By Richard Flatter. Heinemann. 12s. 6d.

The author of this intriguing work approaches his subject from the standpoint of a scholar who combines practical experience of theatrical production with an extensive knowledge of Shakespearian texts. He is the author of scholarly translations into German of a number of the plays, and he had the good fortune to study stagecraft under a master of the art—Reinhardt. Thus well-equipped for the enterprise he has undertaken, he propounds a theory, which would be, if it could be securely established, a discovery of capital importance. He contends that Shakespeare, unlike his fellow-playwright Jonson, was an actor of genius as well as great dramatist, and that in writing his plays he provided solutions of the problems of interpretation that would arise in producing and acting them. Shakespeare did not supply for this purpose the generous stage-directions that Shaw would have supplied in his place, but he indicated in the text itself, by means of marks of punctuation, line-division and the skilful use of irregular metre, just how he intended the plays to be produced and acted. The marks of Shakespeare's producing hand are to be found, Dr. Flatter says, in the text of the Folio, which "was probably printed from Shakespeare's autograph, now lost." The "marks" disappeared in the 18th century texts, whose editors silently rubbered out irregularities of metre in pursuit of a false ideal of neat and smooth versification.

Dr. Flatter justly calls the 18th century editors to account for the liberties they took with the text of the dramatist (e.g., filling in metrical gaps and completing unfinished lines of verse), but it may be said in extenuation of their offences that they but followed the example set by the Folio editors, who started the indefensible practice of "regularizing" the poet's versification. For instance, the Quarto of 2 *Henry IV* (4, 2, 116-7) reads:

"But for you, rebels, look to taste the due
Meet for rebellion."

The Folio editors completed the second line:

"Meet for rebellion and such acts as yours."

The five added words are superfluous, and they are so feeble in themselves that they are quite obviously a stop-gap. Dr. Flatter asserts that Shakespeare's fellow-dramatists, *unlike Shakespeare*, were more concerned with prosody than with stagecraft; to illustrate this statement he points out that in their "entries" and "asides" characters are made to complete lines of verse of which they have not heard a word. For example, in an "entry" in Ford's *The Broken Heart*, 2, 2, we read:

"Armotes: The princess, with your sister.
Enter Calantha—and others.

Calantha: I present you

A stranger here in court, my lord; for did not"

And here is an "aside" from the same play, 1, 3:

"Orgilus [*aside*]: . . . my mind is busy,
Mine eyes and ears are open.

Prophilus (to Euphranea): Do not waste

The span of this stolen time, lent by the gods"

Dr. Flatter quotes from plays by contemporaries of Shakespeare numerous instances of this lapse in stagecraft, and comments on them: "Does it ever

happen that on entering the stage a person begins his speech in the middle of a line? Not with Shakespeare, one would say." But Shakespeare was of his age; he too honoured the conventions of the contemporary theatre. Take this "entry" from 2 *Henry IV.*, 4, 5:

"War. Less noise, less noise!

Enter—*Prince Henry.*

Prince: Who saw the Duke of Gloucester?"

Or take these "asides" from *The Tempest*, 1, 2:

"*Miranda* [*aside*]: . . . pity move my father

To be inclin'd my way!

Ferdinand: [*aside*] O! if a virgin,

And your affection not gone forth, I'll make you

The Queen of Naples.

Prospero: Soft, sir; one word more."

Dr. Flatter is inadvertently unfair to the modern editors of Shakespeare in a reference he makes to the reading *fare thee well* in 1 *Henry IV.*, 5, 4, 87. He is arguing in support of the Folio reading *farewell*:

"No, Percy, thou art dust

And food for—

Prince: For Wormes, brave Percy. Farewell, great heart."

Dr. Flatter comments as follows: "The Prince finishes the broken-off sentence: 'for worms, brave Percy.' Then, either sinking his sword, or making some other gesture of reverence, he bids his noble foe farewell: 'Farewell, great heart.' It seems to be in keeping with Shakespeare's diction that before these words, in order to allow for that short gesture, there should be a small pause—and there it is: one syllable is missing." Dr. Flatter concludes with some asperity: "The editors, however, thought it their duty to regularize what they regarded as a 'faulty line': silently they inserted the missing syllable, and thus it is that in all modern editions the words: 'Farewell, great heart' have been exchanged for 'Fare thee well, great heart.'" It is only justice to the modern editors of Shakespeare to point out that *fare thee well* was the reading of the authoritative First Quarto and of all subsequent Quartos of the play.

Dr. Flatter's criticism of the punctuation of the text in modern editions of Shakespeare would appear to have some justification in many of the cases he cites. He does not maintain that, in the absence of a generally accepted system of punctuation, Shakespeare had thought out an individual rule for himself, but he suggests that punctuation may have been in his hands "a sensitive instrument with which to indicate theatrical subtleties, especially of declamation." Thus in *Macbeth*, 2, 2, 62:

"Making the Greene one, Red,"

he thinks that the comma indicated the wish of the dramatist that the actor should raise his voice in "one" and should then pause for a short moment.

In the chapter entitled "Simultaneousness" (*i.e.*, where two or more characters speak simultaneously), Dr. Flatter offers a convincing defence of a scene of lamentation in *Romeo and Juliet* (4, 5, 33 ff.) that has been dismissed by critics as ridiculous, or even as "wholly un-Shakespearean." Dr. Flatter aptly describes the scene, in which Capulet, Lady Capulet, Paris and the Nurse, wail in unison, as "a four-part madrigal of wailing in which only the concerted sound is essential and not the meaning of the words."

There is much of interest alike to lovers of the stage and of Shakespeare in this thought-provoking book. Throughout, the author insists that Shakespeare was a dramatist first and foremost, and that his plays were written to be acted, and not, primarily at least, to be read. Future editors will profit, no doubt, from a study of his views: it is probable that they will be influenced in particular by his eloquent plea for a drastic revision of the arrangement and division of lines of verse that our modern texts have inherited from the 18th century.

R. P. C.

DEVROY'S POST BAG. Edited by William O'Brien and Desmond Ryan. C. J. Fallon, Ltd., 1948. 30s.

This volume of 568 pages is of the greatest interest and importance. It consists of letters written to John Devoy between 1871 and 1880, and it illuminates the Fenian Movement in particular, and, in an indirect way, the Irish scene as well, as no commentary on the movement has done, or can do. The movement is displayed, so to put it, from the inside, in these letters, written in the heat of the moment—and every prominent Fenian, at home and in America, wrote to Devoy—and every line of which testifies to the patriotism, the honesty, and the singlemindedness of the writers.

There are characteristic letters from John O'Leary, in which the view of Stephens which he takes, thus early, is exactly the same as that in his *Recollections* of 1896—viz.: that he was a great man, and that it was he that made Fenianism possible. There are most interesting letters from Kickham, in which his interest in literature is apparent. Writing to Devoy in 1876, he thanks Devoy for *Harper's Magazine*, and asks him to continue sending it until George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda*, then appearing serially in it, has concluded. There are letters from John Boyle O'Reilly, including one dated 1880, in which he is as cutting about John O'Leary as O'Leary commonly is about everybody else, and there is a fine letter of J. J. O'Kelly's, dated 1877, about Parnell. But one could go on enumerating name after name. There is a curious letter of 7th June, 1877, from one B. K. Kennedy to Rossa, sent by him to Dr. Carroll, who was a trustee of the *Skimishing Fund*, asking to be financed home in order to shoot Lord Leitrim. In a covering note, Rossa states that he has other Longford and Leitrim men volunteering for this, and Lord Leitrim was actually shot on 2nd April, 1878, it is generally believed by local men, though it has never been definitely established.

What emerges out of these pages is the persistence of Fenianism, its steadfastness, and its wide sweep. The Clan na Gael had "conversations" with the Russian Ambassador in Washington in 1876, in an endeavour to get common action, and it financed D. P. Holland in experimenting with, and perfecting, his submarine, which was refused in the first instance by the American Government, and also by the British, and accepted on second thoughts by the Americans. It kept a watchful eye on every world happening which might possibly be used to Ireland's advantage.

A special word of praise must go to the biographical particulars given of the individuals mentioned, which are most admirably done, and in which a great

deal of research is embodied, and also to the very complete index, both which enhance the value of the book and make reference to its contents easy.

The projected volume to include the letters after 1880 will be looked forward to eagerly.

P. S.

THE ARCHITECTURAL SETTING OF ANGLICAN WORSHIP. By G. W. O. Addleshaw & Frederick Fitchells. Published by Faber & Faber, London. 25/-.

This extremely important work will appeal to many different kinds of readers. The Anglican Ecclesiologist will wish to own it so that he may be able to refer to it on almost any question of architecture or ceremony. Nor, indeed, will he be alone in this; our own day has seen the growth of two flourishing Liturgical Movements, one in the Churches of the Roman Obedience and the other among the Free Churches. Those who are trying to teach their people in the words of a very holy Pope "not merely to pray at Mass but to pray the Mass," like those others who are re-introducing their flocks to a liturgical worship which their fathers neglected; cannot afford to neglect four centuries of Anglican experiment.

There is another, and less obvious kind of reader to whom this work should appeal. To take an intelligent interest in the arts does not necessarily involve sharing in the religio-political views of all artists. It is, however, necessary to understand what the artist believed, and why he shaped his Church or Mosque or Temple in such a way, or adorned it with some particular ornament. A reader seeking such understanding will find this work of absorbing interest, and should he chance to be an Irishman, proud of the treasures of his native land, he will hardly be able to allow it out of his library. Fortunately, the fatal "correctness" of Victorian Churchmen was sufficiently involved with the Tractarian Movement to be rather suspect in the Irish Church. So, though many of our treasures perished at that time, enough were preserved to interest our authors, particularly in this country.

Do we realise that from 1628-1823 was one of the greatest Cathedral-building epochs in Irish Church history? Can even the so-called "ages of faith" produce such a list as Derry 1628-33, Dromore "after the Restoration," Killala 1670, Cork 1735, Clogher 1745, Waterford 1773, Cashel 1778, Downpatrick 1790-1818, and Achonry 1823? Of these Cork has since been replaced by the present magnificent neo-Gothic pile, "the Church's answer to Disestablishment," just as Cashel and Waterford replaced the glories of those Mediaeval architects, who quite as lightly cast away the rugged richness of the Romanesque to make room for their own living and modern art. Nor in our list of pre-disestablishment Anglican Cathedrals have we said anything about the many restorations and re-arrangements of older buildings, or about such lovely things as the Choir Screen now lightly thrust into the South Transept of Armagh Cathedral. "The finest Cathedral built during the period is" undoubtedly "Waterford; but modern furniture has rather spoilt the character of its delicate rococo interior". Perhaps, however, the most interesting thing is to find how many Cathedrals that had the Canons' Stalls placed at the West End, either of the whole building or of that part of it which was used by the congregation; so "the problem of how to bring the congregation near the altar was solved in almost exactly the same way as . . . in Spain," where the walled-off choir or

"coro" is placed at or near the West End. Nor is this the only point of likeness between Spanish and Anglican Churchmen. Plate XI shows us the "High Altar of the Dominican Church Salamanca" as "an example of the similarity of the treatment of the altar in the Church of England" and Ireland, to "that common in conservative Roman Catholic circles on the Continent in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries"; and draws our attention to "the pulpit with its shaped tester and the plain iron rails." The visitor to Waterford who explores the lovely little Penal Chapel of St. Patrick after investigating the Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Trinity and Church of St. Olaf, will find himself in a surprisingly similar atmosphere, considering our history of persecution and counter-persecution set amid all the horrors of "religious" and civil war.

Towards the end of our period the Irish Church seems to have been moving towards a central position for the Holy Table, as in the Armagh architect's, Francis Johnston's, circular Church of S. Andrew, Dublin, which was unhappily burned down in 1860. St. George's, Dublin, is another example by the same architect, but there the vestry-space has since been turned into a Victorian Chancel with rather unfortunate results. We may, as we contemplate the riches of these aspects of our national inheritance, even pardon two such purists for placing 16 churches in the "Irish Free State." At least we may balance against that, their description of Bartholomew Mosse's religious provision for the patients and friends of his famous Rotunda. "Here infants could be baptized and women churched. The large alabaster font was bequeathed by Dr. Robert Downes, Bishop of Raphoe; he brought it from Italy *at that time* a favourite haunt of Irish bishops . . . The Chapel . . . is the finest baroque church interior in the British Isles. Its chief glory is Cremillon's ceiling with the figures of Faith, Hope and Charity, great clusters of grapes and olive branches, and angels carrying scrolls" which "speak of the travail accompanying child-birth, of the honour and care that are due to children, and how they can only find their true happiness in the . . . Church. . . . The altar is most dignified with its wrought-iron rails. Each side of the window behind the altar is draped with red and gold stucco curtains held up by cherubim; at the top the curtains form a canopy for the *Agnus Dei* . . . before which angels kneel in adoration."

—C. M. S.

SOCIALISM AND NATIONALISM By James Connolly. Three Candles Press. 7/6.

COLLECTED WRITINGS. By James Fintan Lalor. Talbot Press. 6s.

This collection of James Connolly's writings is of considerable value to the student of history and to all those who want to know the way in which Connolly responded to the pressure of events in the fierce conflicts of his time. What I found of most vital interest were his intransigent articles written during the 1914 World War and his outspoken comments on the early Asquith-Redmond-Carson partition deal. Inevitably, there is much repetition in this collection of propagandist journalism. Unfortunately the editor, Mr. Desmond Ryan, has made no attempt in his introduction, to place Connolly's writings—of over thirty years ago—in any kind of historical perspective. Merely to emphasise that Connolly was a Socialist and a Nationalist becomes wearisome when Connolly himself drives home these points again and again. What was needed

was a concise approach to his work explaining the various contemporary factors and how these influenced his controversial writings. This would have underlined what was permanent in his teaching as distinct from what is purely ephemeral.

During the early period of the 1914 conflict, for example, Connolly always wrote as a belligerent opposed to Britain. His comments on the Russia of the Czars and Germany of the Kaiser belong to an epoch that ended when Europe was shattered in 1918. Taken out of their historical context and applied to the modern world of 1948, they could be used by the unscrupulous or the simple-minded to support views that would certainly be out of harmony with Connolly's fundamental Socialist thought. Connolly's unique place as a leader in the National and Labour struggle gives an importance to all his writings and this selection will be of still greater value if the reader has a sense of history.

It is not surprising that there should be a demand for the new and revised edition of James Fintan Lalor's writings, first issued in 1918. Mrs. L. Fogarty, M.A., has written an admirably full biographical note placing Lalor in relation to the men and movements of his time. He is contrasted with his contemporaries, Mitchel, Gavan Duffy, Dillon, Luby and others. The efforts that Lalor made to expound his ideas through the pages of *The United Irishman*, *The Nation*, *The Irish Felon* and other journals of the period are treated in sufficient detail for the background of those terrible famine years to come alive. Against all this we can doubly appreciate the ringing quality of Lalor's utterances. The frontispiece picture of Fintan Lalor reinforces the impression of the text. Those who are interested in his sincere and passionate contribution to the cause of Irish freedom cannot do better than read this volume. His letter "To the Landowners of Ireland" deserves to be remembered along with such historic documents as Standish O'Grady's appeal to the Irish landlords and A.E.'s 1913 letter "To the Masters of Dublin." Lalor's arresting opening is characteristic of his style and thought—"I address you, my lords and gentlemen, from a great distance—the distance that separates you from the people—for I am one of the people . . ."

Like Connolly, Fintan Lalor was a man who believed that thought should lead to action, the word to the deed. Connolly is in direct line of succession from him and helped to resurrect Lalor's *Faith of a Felon* for a later generation. Connolly's own writings before the 1916 Rising have that same dedicated and defiant note that one finds in Lalor. The same flame of sincerity burns in their words.

—R. M. Fox.

LITERATURE AND LIFE. Addresses to the English Association. Harrap & Co., Ltd. Price: 8/6.

A collection of addresses, each lively and notable for its scholarship, that 'ranges from Art and Architecture to Biography and Epigram; from a Defence of Modernist Poetry to a garnering of the literary associations centred around the City of Bath,' can receive but scant justice in a short review.

Sir H. Idris Bell's 'The Problem of Translation' is an admirable analysis ending with the plea: "All who value the rich variety of human experience and lay any emphasis on the spiritual as against the merely material values of human life should resolutely oppose the specious effort to abolish the national

languages in the supposed interests of international understanding." In 'England and Greece,' Osbert Lancaster most delightfully shows that "an inquiry into the aesthetic exchange between our two countries is perhaps, not so remote and esoteric an occupation after all." C. S. Lewis' examination of Kipling's work is remarkable for its acumen and will be equally illuminating to those who admire and to those who detest that writer.

"Live Dogs and Dead Lions," by V. de Pinto, argues that: "Modernist poetry has now been a going concern in this country for about a quarter of a century. In that short period it has not produced anything great, if we measure greatness in terms of a Dante or a Shakespeare or even of a Pope or a Byron. But it has performed a work of destruction and creation which were essential if the art of poetry is to have a future in this country and is not to lapse into the condition of the hobby of a dying leisured class."

The remaining essays also will engage the attention of the general reader, as well as of the scholar, by their urbanity and merit.

THE IRISH IN MODERN SCOTLAND. By J. E. Handley. Cork University Press. 17s. 6d.

Continuing his pioneer work in this field, Dr. Handley brings his account, social and economic rather than political, down to our own day, thus covering more than a century, from 1798 to our own day—150 years in all. Like its predecessors, the book is very comprehensive and painstaking, and full use has been made of blue books, newspapers, and the more accessible printed sources.

Dr. Handley brings out clearly which is not generally realised—that the Irishman, in Scotland as elsewhere, had to fight his way against prejudice and hostility. He was mostly poor, and he was strange in his manners and habits, and he was clannish, and his heart was always at home, though naturally less so after the first generation. He made good, but the wastage was tremendous. For one who made good, many must have fallen by the wayside. Dr. Handley's picture of the emigration to Scotland in the Famine Years and after, is in many ways a heartrending one, but the survivors over the years fought their way into organisation, into education, which opened many closed doors, and self-respect which begot respect in others. They have had no small part in the strength of Liberalism, and now of Labour, in Scotland.

P. S. O'HEGARTY.

THE LEGACY OF SWIFT. A Bi-Centenary Record of St. Patrick's Hospital, Dublin. At the Sign of the Three Candles, 1948. 5s.

If I should ever have the good fortune of meeting with the ghost of Swift, I hope I may have *The Legacy of Swift* ready at hand, that, by offering it to him, I may wheedle him into the right mood for answering all kinds of questions, pertinent and impertinent, his so-called clandestine marriage to Stella probably the first among them. For it cannot be doubted that he would be both agreeably surprised at the superb execution of this volume, and highly pleased with its contents.

The printer and publisher, Mr. Colm O Lochlainn, appears to be an artist in the domain of book production. The type, the paper, the arrangement, the illustrations are all excellent in their kind, with the result that his book can easily bear comparison with those of the very best of private presses.

After a short Foreword by the Chief Justice and Governor of the Hospital, the Hon. Conor A. Maguire, there are five good essays, two of them (by Dr. R. Wyse Jackson, and Maurice James Craig, Esq.) dealing with the inception and evolution of Swift's plan constitutionally, two others (by Dr. J. D. H. Widdess, and Dr. J. N. P. Moore) containing the history of the Hospital from a medical point of view, and one (by the editor, Mr. Craig) treating of the buildings. They are followed by a list of the officers of the Hospital from the beginning to the present time, and a catalogue of the exhibition.

The development of Swift's plan from about 1731 to his death would have borne a more detailed account, but Dr. Wyse Jackson has justly realized that a more extensive treatment would have been out of place in a book pre-eminently concerned with a history of the vicissitudes and present shape of a medical institution. To these ample justice is done in the other articles, in which due praise is accorded to Dr. Robert Emmet and Dr. R. R. Leeper of whom pictures appear in the text. They contain several other interesting details, too many to record in a short review.

The Catalogue of the exhibits is divided into three groups: Objects, Manuscripts, Printed Books. Chief among them are a 'portrait in oils, believed to be Swift' (see the frontispiece), Swift's *escritoire*, a stand-cabinet presented to Swift by Lady Carteret or Lady Worsley, some of Lord Rothschild's treasures (the famous 'Ham House' *Gulliver* among them), and others from libraries and institutions in Ireland.

Finally, great credit is due to the editor, Mr. Craig, for the way in which he has performed his task.

H. TEERINK.

TWO LOVELY BEASTS. By Liam O'Flaherty. Victor Gollancz Ltd. Price 9/6.

This collection of short stories ranges from the lightly satirical and comic to studies, mostly of peasant life, that are acid, nostalgic, passionate and with a texture, grouping and movement that, at their best, make them comparable to the work of Synge.

Whether Liam O'Flaherty is describing a peasant's growing obsession with the *idea* of power and property, the awakening of a young girl to the urgency of love, frustration and bewilderment, birth, partings and death, there is beauty revealed with an inherent simplicity and sharpened by irony and the strength of a writer sensitive to the incongruities and stupidities as well as the tragedy of the human situation.

"A scream came up into her throat, but it went no farther. It remained there unuttered. Her woe was too deep for tears. She just sat looking across the narrow road in silence at the cold white stones that were beating fiercely against the cold black stones."

"The flute-player was now putting his whole soul into his music. The notes that came from his flute were like cries of agony coming from a wounded bird, asking for succour. He reached out with all his power to the indifferent woman, struggling to touch her heart with the beauty of his music."

"He uncovered his head when he came into the presence of the new-born. He crossed himself and bent a knee in homage to the new life.

'May God bless you,' he said to the child.

Then he went over to the bed and bowed to his wife in the same way. 'Thank God,' he said to her gently, 'you have that much past you.' She smiled faintly as she looked at him.

'I'm glad,' she said, that it was a son I gave you as my last child.'

'May God reward you for it!' he said fervently as he again bowed to her."

"At the water's edge lay the tall grey houses of the old Spanish town and beyond, the new town rose, bright and arrogant, like the new breed that was conquering the old.

"The old man stopped moving about. He looked once more over the rail at the animals in the hold. They were barely visible in the twilight. Not a sound came from them. They also missed the sun. Its going deprived them of part of their life. It had been a link that bound them to their island. Tears came into the old man's eyes as he looked down at them. Now he repented of having quarrelled with his daughter and taken his cow. He felt lonely unto death."

These quotations, even out of their context, show the economy of his technique, and something of the qualities that relate much of O'Flaherty's work to that of certain Russian writers of the late nineteenth century.

UNCLE SILAS. By Sheridan Le Fanu, with an introduction by Elizabeth Bowen. The Cresset Press, London. Price 8/6.

Elizabeth Bowen's introduction to this new edition of "Uncle Silas" is the subtle analysis of a fellow craftsman. She states that the function of an introduction is 'to indicate the nature of a book and to suggest some angles of judgment,' but her part has also been to underline those nuances that might escape the reader breathlessly following this 'psychological thriller' for the first time.

Whether commenting on Maud as 'an uncertain keyboard, on which some notes sound clearly, deeply and truly, others not at all,' and on her sensuousness, on the French governess who, as Uncle Silas's rival, is 'physical as opposed to metaphysical evil,' or on the group of lightly sketched characters that 'represents Le Fanu's one economy,' Miss Bowen is as finely critical as when discussing the actual plot, the balance and structure of the book.

One may question her belief that 'Uncle Silas' is comparable to "Wuthering Heights" but her judgment is surely right that Le Fanu in playing on the fears of childhood—of being in other people's power, apprehension of the unknown—has lost none of his strength. 'These leave their work at the base of our natures, and are never to be rationalized away.'

'All through Le Fanu's writing, there is an ecstatic sensitivity to light, and an abnormal recoil from its inverse, darkness. *Uncle Silas* is full of outdoor weather—we enjoy the rides and glades, cross the brooks and stiles, meet the cottagers and feel the enclosing walls of two kingdom-like great estates. Though static in ever-autumn, those scenes change: there is more than the rolling across them of clouds or sunshine. Indeed we are looking at their reflection in the lightening or darkening mirror of Maud's mind.'

So acute a perception of the whole texture of "Uncle Silas" makes Miss Bowen's introduction a valuable contribution to any modern study of Le Fanu.

THE MOUNTAIN OF THE UPAS TREE. By Richard March. Editions Poetry London. Price: 7/6.

One of the characters in "The Mountain of the Upas Tree" remarks of its hero: 'And I ruminate so often on this question, more particularly when I see Giles entangling himself still deeper in the meshes he has woven around his life, *until in a sort of sudden convulsion the whole inextricable fantasia reels into another dimension*, that I begin to wonder whether it isn't I myself performing such contortions, and what an extraordinary business it is, how exhausting, and why do we do it?'

This seems a reasonably fair comment on the book itself—the quest of a young man for the secret of the Upas Tree and his destruction. The forced and bleak symbolism, the formlessness, a selfconscious *mise en scène* of D. H. Lawrence, Kafka, existentialism and surrealism give to the book an air of pretentiousness. Yet the positive merits are considerable—pages showing poetic imagination, descriptive power, originality and forcefulness—and when the author can persuade his readers that his material is the pattern of experience and not artifice, his work should be outstanding.

THE WISDOM OF DR. JOHNSON. Being Comments on Life and Moral Precepts chosen from his Writings. Compiled with an Introduction by Constantia Maxwell. Harrap & Co., Ltd. Price: 10/6.

This is an admirable anthology. Those who are little acquainted with Dr. Johnson's majestic prose and the greatness of his literary achievements will find here so much robust good sense and tempered understanding of human nature, such dignity of principles, courage and cordiality, that they will be persuaded to know him better as man and writer; and Johnson enthusiasts will welcome a collection of his aphorisms with the merit of a variety that admits contradiction, that makes explicit his comprehensive mind, and does justice to his relish of mankind.

"To promote vice is certainly unlawful; but we do not always encourage vice when we relieve the vicious. It is sufficient that our brother is in want; by which way he brought his want upon him, let us not too curiously inquire. We likewise are sinners."

"I hate a fellow whom pride, or cowardice, or laziness drives into a corner, and (who) does nothing when he is there but sit and *growl*; let him come out as I do, and *bark*."

"It is the duty of every man to endeavour that something may be added by his industry to the hereditary aggregate of knowledge and happiness."

"A man, Sir, should keep his friendship *in constant repair*."

"All the arguments which are brought to represent poverty as no evil, show it to be evidently a great evil. You never find people labouring to convince you that you may live very happily upon a plentiful fortune."

These quotations at random show how well planned the anthology is to exhibit Dr. Johnson's humanity and energetic wisdom. As excellent as her choice of precepts, is Dr. Maxwell's introduction. She modestly calls it a reminder "of the chief facts of the author's life, of his works, and of his character;" but its balance, cogency and appreciation give considerable distinction to Dr. Maxwell's essay.

CHAMBER MUSIC. By A. Hyatt King.

THE MUSICAL HISTORY OF COVENT GARDEN. By Desmond Shawe-Taylor.

THE WORLD OF MUSIC SERIES, Nos. 3 and 4. Max Parrish & Co., Ltd. Price 6/- each.

Chamber Music. In a book of much distinction, A. Hyatt King traces the history of this 'music of friends' from the *sonata da camera*, a favourite of the 1580's in Italy, through its main development in Italy, England and Spain. He refers to the considerable influence exercised by English composers in Germany in the seventeenth century, and writes a fascinating chapter on the rise of the violins.

With astonishing amplitude in a book of its length, is discussed the chamber music of, among many, Purcell, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Brahms. Nineteenth century Russian and European composers down to the moderns; Poulenc, Honegger, Hindemith, Manuel de Falla, Roussel, Bloch, Walton, Tippett—all who have contributed finely to this 'art of the musical idealist' have their tribute. There is a lovely drift of words like 'Pavans, Ayres, Corants and Sarabands for Viols or Violins,' the inventory of Henry VIII's musical instruments, and Henry Peacham's 'Infinite is the sweete varietie that the Theorique of Musicke exerciseth the mind withal,' to delight the reader.

To this masterly sketch of its musical history, the author adds a profound understanding of the chamber music of its greatest composers. Of the three quartets commissioned by Prince Galitzin, he writes: 'In this stupendous trilogy, Beethoven explored wholly new regions of consciousness, in which he discovered new syntheses of spiritual experience. Each quartet co-ordinates an aspect of the same transcendent, mystical vision, which is expressed, as Wagner put it, in a serenity that passes beyond beauty.'

The illustrations in colour and monochrome of medieval instruments, players and scores down to studies of modern performers are worthy of the text.

Covent Garden. 'The play, on this occasion, is *not* the thing, and I shall offer no further apology for the indecent speed at which the mighty ghosts of Garrick, Kemble and Mrs. Siddons must seem to flit across the page.' Despite this disclaimer, and though the emphasis is, of course, on its musical history, Desmond Shawe-Taylor contrives to give a very delightful and witty account of the theatrical history of Covent Garden from its first opening in 1732.

Its musical importance in the early days lay in its association with Handel. With the opening of a new and larger theatre in 1809, after the disastrous fire following a performance of Sheridan's 'Pizarro,' began regular opera seasons. The author points out that the bland adaptations of the masterpieces of Mozart, Rossini, Weber, Donizetti and Verdi aroused no horror as it was only with Wagner that 'the conception of opera as a unified and inviolable work of art' really took shape.

After yet another fire in 1856 which destroyed the contents of the theatre—including four of Hogarth's paintings—Covent Garden was reopened in 1858. This was the age of great singers. One marvels at the list of names, from Patti, Jean de Reszke, Albani, Melba, Lehmann, Caruso, Tetrzzini on to Schumann and Gigli. We are reminded that it is not merely nostalgic memories that would refer to the nineties as the last Golden Age of Opera. The gramophone proves that there was 'a level of vocal excellence unknown today:

beauty and steadiness of tone, evenness of scale, ease of breath control, and authority of manner.' And the audiences responded as connoisseurs and with a real knowledge of the librettos.

Following an account of the part played by Sir Thomas Beecham, the Carl Rosa Company, the British National Opera Company, and of the visits of distinguished foreign Opera Companies and the Russian Ballet, Mr. Shawe-Taylor ends with a chapter on the present work and future prospects of Covent Garden.

The illustrations which range from a charming water-colour of John Rich as Harlequin to a design for a stage setting by Edward Burra, are an enthralling collection.

EL GRECO: CHRIST ON THE CROSS. WATTEAU: EMBARKATION FOR CYTHERA.

DELACROIX: MASSACRE OF CHIOS. A GALLERY OF MASTERPIECES: Nos. 4, 5 and 6. Max Parrish & Co., Ltd. Price: 7/6 each.

This series carry out the admirable plan that the inveterate and omnivorous visitor to art-galleries proposes to himself in moods of repentance. One great work of art is analysed, its background and its genesis studied, the relation of the artist to his contemporary world considered. And so discreet is the authority who writes the text of each book, that the reader has the pleasure of his own discoveries in examining sketches, the development of the composition, and in comparing it with work that had influenced the artist.

The mystical fervour that El Greco had in common with Saint Teresa and Saint John of the Cross, his transmutation of Toledo into a world of inner experience, his Byzantinism, love of the baroque, and obsessions; Watteau's predilection for the Venetians, his reverence for Rubens, and essentially lyric qualities; Delacroix as 'the restless never-satisfied genius,' the effect on him of Constable's way of rendering light, and the extracts from his diaries showing that he was the first to formulate the principles of Impressionism: such is the material of these studies by, respectively, Maurice Serullaz, Assistant Curator of the Louvre Museum, Helene Adhemar, Assistant Curator of the Louvre Museum, and Paul-Henri Michel, Assistant Keeper at the Bibliothèque Mazarine.

Appended to each book are biographical notes, a brief bibliography, and the history of the painting. The reproductions are excellent.

IRISH GEOGRAPHY. Vol. I. No. 5. Dublin, 1948. Price: 3/-

The present issue of *Irish Geography* completes the first volume (1944-8). As the Bulletin of the Geographical Society of Ireland, its aim is 'to provide a medium for publishing Irish researches, particularly those of a detailed nature which may not have a sufficiently wide appeal to appear in the senior geographical journals.'

There is an illustrated essay on 'Handspinning and Weaving in Ireland' by Lillias Mitchell, a detailed account of 'Tullamore and its environs, Co. Offaly, by T. W. Freeman, and an interesting contribution to Irish Topographical Terms by E. G. Quin and T. W. Freeman. Following the notes and reviews, are the Annual Report of the Society and the index to the whole volume.

TRANSITION Forty-Eight. No.2. Transition Press, Paris. Price: 4/6.

The most outstanding contribution to the second number of "Transition" is André Malraux's brilliant analysis of Colonel Lawrence's own attitude to the "Seven Pillars of Wisdom"—'this tense and linear book'—and the reasons for his discontent with it.

There is a sensitively written sketch by Jean Maquet in the surrealist manner, a continuation of Antonin Artaud's "On a Journey to the Land of the Tarahumaras," and unpunctuated poems in French with his own translations by Samuel Beckett. The last of these is a decidedly ungallant piece of self-imposed misery:

I would like my love to die
and the rain to be falling on the graveyard
and on me walking the streets
mourning the first and last to love me.

Henri Pichette, called by some critics 'the genius, the poet we have been waiting for,' contributes an open letter to Max-Pol Fouchet, and "Apoème A," with translation. That he possesses 'an abundant, surging gift for verbal creation' is obvious, but it is equally obvious that a psycho-analytic presentation and hysterical outbursts sadly need the discipline of form.

Much of "Transition" is taken up with a discussion of Sartre's attitude to surrealism. There are contributions by André Breton, Sartre and others; and the fervour of the arguments, and their elaboration, about surrealism, existentialism and communism give the impression that polemics must be the latest art-form. One is grateful to the editor, Georges Duthuit, for an admirable review devoted to what is important in contemporary French writing.

RANN. A Quarterly of Ulster Poetry. Standard Office, Lisburn, Co. Antrim.
1/-.

POETRY IRELAND. Trumpet Books. Cork. 2/-.

THE GREENWOOD ANTHOLOGY. Edited by Herbert Palmer. Muller. 7/6.

POEMS OF THE WAR YEARS. Edited by Maurice Wollman. Macmillan. 12/6.

Rann is a new Ulster quarterly entirely devoted to poetry. It is the first magazine of its kind ever attempted in that province of Ireland and it is to be hoped that its editors, Barbara Hutton and Roy McFadden, will get the support which they demand in their introduction. The tone of this first number is quietly conservative: the emotional content is low and some of the poems are little more than faithful records of things seen. John Hewitt and John Boyd contribute good poems in "Sheep Fair" and "Visit to a School" but there are too many flat prosaic lines in Jack McQuaid's "The New Scythe Blade" and William McDermott's "Trout" and both poems lack illumination. One respects the sincerity of statement in these and in Michael McLaverty's poem "In Memory of William Hurson" but after so much honest quietude one is almost grateful for the easy flamboyance of Robert Greacen's "Evening in July: Belfast." Under the heading "Ancestral Voices," the editors include four epigrams by James Campbell of Ballynure, one of the men of '98, and six stanzas of racy dialect "A Winter Night in the North of Ireland" from John McKinley's "The Giant's Causeway," 1819. The notes at the head of these extracts are welcome but one could dispense with the authors' explanations and the titles of their published works which accompany the poems by living poets. There is an attractive cover design by Rowel Friers.

Poetry Ireland, another new magazine, opens more ambitiously with poems by Padraic Colum, C. Day Lewis, Robert Farren and others and an article by L. A. G. Strong. John Hewitt's "Overture for Ulster Regionalism" has a quality of weighty determination about it and forms an interesting commentary on the work printed in *Rann*. Sean Jennet's "Barge Horses" would be more at home in the Ulster magazine than here were it not for the embarrassing sentimentality of its close. Padraic Colum's poem on "The Statues and The Clock" is developed with lovely precision but the conclusion eludes this reader at least. Ewart Milne contributes three poems which have their own merits but which might be echoes of three different voices. Robert Greacen's "September Returns" is probably as good a poem as he has ever written, with perhaps one exception, but Day Lewis's contributions have strangely amateurish moments. Padraic Fiacca's "In The Midlands" has an incantatory excitement in it and Robert Farren has two poems, very much his own and animated by an impulse sufficiently strong to carry one over the obstacles of a style whose art is not in its concealment. George Hetherington completes the total of poets with two racy stanzas and L. A. G. Strong's article on James Stephens is acute and likable. This is a most interesting first number and promises well for the future of the new magazine.

In *The Greenwood Anthology* Herbert Palmer has performed a prodigious labour of love, for in him the love of poetry is so strong, his interest in all its manifestations so overwhelming, that he cannot resist bringing to notice any work in which he has discovered merit. Here he has weeded out from over a thousand entries for the Greenwood Prize in 1943, some seventy-five poems to make "an anthology for the *Times*, for the market place, an anthology for and of the people." Naturally there are great inequalities between the poems,—some are by professional poets of standing, some by the veriest amateurs working under the stress of strong emotion aroused by the war; but on the whole, the editor has succeeded in his aim of printing only verse "which is living speech—which seems to come out of the writer's inner self." Among the best poems in the book are "Pendle Hill," a long pastoral by Herbert Corby and a narrative poem, alternately naïve and subtle called "Avery" by Alberta Vickridge. These were both among the runners-up to Ada Jackson's "Behold The Jew" which was published separately as a pamphlet in 1943, and was reviewed in these pages. Another runner-up, Wilfrid Gibson's "The Dinghy" is rather ponderous but among a dozen or so shorter poems of real quality are Douglas Gibson's "Birth and Death" and Irene P. Turner's "Emily Brontë."

Maurice Wollman is a practical anthologist. His two previous collections "Modern Poetry, 1922-34" and "Poems of Twenty Years, 1918-38" were solid achievements in their admission of variety combined with maintenance of quality. He has followed them with *Poems of The War Years* and again succeeds in achieving some sort of unity in diversity by the imposition of his own taste without bigotry or prejudice and by skilful arrangement. His anthology might be called conservative, balanced, catholic, a dozen other things in an attempt to describe its quality, but perhaps it is best to say that it is as satisfying as an anthology with its inclusive aim can be. It gives, as it is intended to do, a very fair summary of the shorter English poetry of the years 1939 to 1946, omitting a few notable writers and including among its hundred

poets some who are not at all well known. Presumably the Editor of such an anthology begins with a list of established poets from whom he takes what poems appeal to him and suit his plan. After that there must be an element of luck—some scarcely known poets will come to his notice by chance or the recommendation of friends, others of equal or greater merit will not come his way. All he can hope to do is to spread his net wide and make pickings from his catch with care and knowledge. Mr. Wollman read over seven hundred books of verse before completing his collection and extended his range in time beyond the true limits of his title. That title, *Poems of The War Years* suggests an anthology of War Poetry, but although a high percentage of the pieces are definitely War Poems, quite a number cannot be described as such. The anterior limit chosen by Mr. Wollman was to exclude any poem published *in book form* before 1939 which allows, of course, the inclusion of poems written well before the war. By extending his dates to 1946 he has been able to include poems written after the war, and by an ingenious "heads I win, tails you lose" kind of argument he claims that almost all are war poems since all were influenced in some way by the war—"directly in theme or atmosphere, or indirectly in reaction or escape." Anyhow, this matter of title is unimportant except that it may prejudice some potential purchasers who will imagine that the selection is limited in a way that it actually is not, and who would hardly expect to find that *Poems of the War Years* includes work by Yeats, de la Mare, F. R. Higgins and many others not thought of as War Poets. Apart from his choice of title Mr. Wollman is to be congratulated upon his remarkably representative summary in three hundred poems of "the output of poetry in Britain" during the period selected.

W. P. M.

THE UNDYING DAY. By Robert Greacen. The Falcon Press. 7s. 6d.

THE NINTH WAVE. By Geoffrey Johnson. Harrap. 6s.

HOLES IN THE SKY. By Louis McNeice. Faber. 7s. 6d.

Reading through Robert Greacen's *The Undying Day* one gets the impression of a poet in a hurry. His verse is lacking alike in the inevitability born of immediate inspiration or of long brooding on a theme until it compels utterance and in the deliberate precision imposed by the shaping intellect. But he is alive and eager to get on with the job. Emotion, often the generalised emotion aroused by things experienced at second hand, stimulates him to words. Write he will, whatever comes, and his active mind reaches out snatching and dragging at images where and how it chooses.

His refusal to check the truth of epithet and image, following his attack upon incompletely experienced subjects, means that he must often write nonsense. The first stanza of "Thy Kingdom Shall Come" carries a most unhappy contradiction in "splutter" and "amble":

The chords of emotion mutter,
The leaves of the intellect brown,
But nothing now can splutter
Save the rains that amble down.

That is meaningless and so is the rest of the poem which, unreasonable though it is, falls somewhat short of the divine unreason of Blake. Again, take the opening of "Autumn Prelude":

The trees are battered sheets of bronze
 Whose rust lies powdered on the ground,
 While near-by corn—thin rods of gold—
 Stands futile in the sun's glad stare;
 The fields are speechless with content

The moment is evidently one of a still sunny afternoon in early autumn, but no poet who had loved and made the picture his own would have broken it with the violence of "battered." Nor would a poet careful of his art have allowed such a commonplace as "thin rods of gold." And why is the corn "futile"? Again and again one comes upon the same thing—an incomplete vision allowing the alien world or image to wreck the mood or picture he wishes to create. Mr. Greacen obviously intends to persist in writing verse, and bad though this book is, there are signs that he is beginning to write much better than he did. Personal experience has brought into some of his work a new seriousness, as apart from portentousness, and a new warmth. If he will give his poems a chance to mature before imposing a formless form upon them he may yet write verse of the standard his too-early reputation demands.

While Mr. Greacen's manner and themes excite expectations which they do not satisfy and so arouse resentment, Mr. Johnson's do not, for he is an unpretentious poet. He strikes few attitudes and is not afraid to sing. At his best he is a very fine nature poet and to read him is to return to a wholesome world of wind and sun and rain, of trees and flowers, of children playing and men working. It is, much of it, a poetry of escape if you like, and Mr. Johnson puts no tooth in it when he writes:

What is this life's ado,
 If for a day or two,
 Like squirrel, rook, or cony,
 Or connoisseur and crony,
 I cannot take my ease
 And drink life to the lees
 From wealth I have got around me,
 From books my savings bound me,
 Old poems and old wine,
 Old music, old oak-shine
 My effort has made mine.

It is a fact that when writing naturally of the sights he knows and understands he writes well. A delighted love of children informs such poems as "All Over the World," or "Plum Harvest," and descriptive truth lends value to such poems as "Drought" and "Hay Harvest"; but when he heightens and intensifies his tone he falls away from naturalness into conventions such as:

Our white temple of peace

or:

Songs more exquisite than sighs of flowers,
 and it is a pity that in accepting a necessary rhyme or syllable he sometimes allows himself to use dead words and unhappy inversions. Apart from this he shows technical accomplishment in handling a variety of metres.

It is in itself no denigration of Mr. Greacen and Mr. Johnson to say that with *Holes in the Sky*, by Louis MacNeice we come to poetry of a different and higher order. Authority here is not an assumed air for he has a fine

intellect and technical mastery. One is immediately aware of his power with the first poem: "The Streets of Laredo," a *tour-de-force* of grim and horrible gaiety:

O early one morning I walked out like Agag,
Early one morning to walk through the fire
Dodging the pythons that leaked on the pavement
With tinkle of glass and tangle of wire.

When grimed to the eyebrows I met an old fireman
Who looked at me wryly and thus did he say:
'The streets of Laredo are closed to all traffic,
We won't never master this joker to-day . . .'

In the controversial days of their youth MacNeice moved always a little apart from the terrible three, Auden, Spender and Day Lewis, and in a period of apparent disintegration he was still apart. Now in recovery and a movement to maturity he retains his difference which seems to lie in a harsher note and a more dogged determination to say the thing he means to say and perhaps, too, in a stronger intellectual element, and the influence of the ancient classics. His language is modern, his figures are drawn from contemporary social and urban phenomena as often as from nature, but as time passes they become more unforced, more at home in their setting, in fact more true. Such an unhappy choice as "The would-be absent heart came forth a magnetic mine" with its uncomfortable freakishness sticks out of this book as a notable exception, and it occurs in a poem, "Hiatus," with the fine last stanza:

Yes, we wake stiff and older; especially when
The schoolboys of the Thirties re-appear,
Fledged in the void, indubitably men,
Having kept vigil on the Unholy Mount
And found some dark and tentative things made clear,
Some clear made dark, in the years that did not count.

This book seems to suggest, though there is no autobiographical hint of it, that the poet in MacNeice has survived some profound personal experience, and is, as it were, coming out on the other side re-vitalised and re-equipped. The underlying philosophy is perhaps an acceptance of human existence as it *is*, joy in the good things, light and colour and warmth, and a recognition of the marvellous in man, his unconquerable spirituality—his 'heresy' against nature. Lightly and economically it sounds in the last stanza of "The Cromlech":

Tom is here, Tessy is here
At this point in a given year
With all this hour's accessories,
A given glory—and to look
That gift-horse in the mouth will prove.
Or disprove nothing of their love
Which is as sure intact a fact,
Though young and supple, as what stands
Obtuse and old, in time congealed,
Behind them as they mingle hands—
Self-contained, unexplained,
The cromlech in the clover field.

In the long poem, "The Stygian Banks," the theme is developed in a loose yet shapely blank verse, in which again and again one meets that economy of of phrase which marks the man at once master of his thought and of his method:

. . . . but our despair
Need not exhaust, it is our privilege—
Our paradox—to recognise the insoluble
And going up with outstretched hand salute it

or:

. . . . being about to die
We can salute our death, the consciousness
Of what must be ennobling that arena
Where we have defied what must be.

Holes in the Sky contains poems of many shapes and its transitions from the austere to the lyrical, from gravity to bitter wit, are a delight. The unblinking brutality of such a poem as "The Drunkard" is justified by its absolute truth to experience and its real spirituality, but there seems still to be in MacNeice an inhibition against tenderness. Such a poem as "The Drunkard" shows that he possesses it, but he seldom allows himself to be overtly tender. He would be an even finer poet if he could be moved to do so.

W. P. M.

TONN TUILE. Le Séamus Ó Néill. Sáirséal agus Dill, Baile Átha Cliath. 7/6.

This well-turned out novel by a new publishing firm, Sarsfield and Dill, is quite an event in Irish-Gaelic literature. Its publishers claim that with it our Gaelic literature has come of age and there is something in the claim. It is a very realistic picture of life in middle class Irish-Ireland Dublin. The story is of a young married pair who start off with high ideals. Their marriage shall not become hum-drum, the husband means to achieve literary fame in after-office hours, his wife shall not become a domestic drudge, but must maintain her interest in books and the drama. Gradually, economic difficulties, children, nerves caused by Dublin's blitzes from German planes, such as they were, his occasional extravagance, his literary failures, and finally, after one row worse than the others, an act of adultery on his part, produce a wrecked marriage and blighted hopes. We feel intensely sorry for them as the author succeeds in making us follow the fortunes of this young attractive couple with immense sympathy. Noteworthy is the subtle contrast drawn between the young people of this generation and the older people with their religious fervour and their proud memories of heroic days in "the movement," previous to 1922.

The author achieves his results by means of almost staccato sentences of great simplicity and clarity which produce frequently a most vivid effect. The dialect is that of Donegal to-day, that is to say that there are sentences here and there which would make a purist or traditionalist squirm. But the world moves on.

Written in English, this novel might be considered unpretentious, perhaps wrongly. In the present state of Gaelic letters, a work of such sincerity and artistry is a notable achievement and the author merits our warmest congratulations.

LIAM Ó BRIAIN.

EGO 9. By James Agate. George G. Harrap. 18s.

This journal concludes the autobiography of Jimmie Agate. Essentially a modern, metropolitan phenomenon and *enfant de son siècle*. To some a semi-precious stone; to others a person above rubies. An individual certainly, in an age of the conveyor-belt and drear conformity. This lively diary contains many prejudices, but is not without convictions. The author proclaims: "everything I have liked best in life has begun with a B"—but he preferred Champagne to Beer and Shakespeare to Bacon.

In 1918 his colleague of the *Manchester Guardian*, 'Gerald Cumberland,' wrote: "J. E. Agate, whose fastidious style is a pure delight." Certainly J. A. took pains, and had pride in craftsmanship. He is much disturbed by a faulty French accent; he is pained by his mis-spelling of *hara-kiri* (but should it be spelt, *seppuku*?) He sought continually the *bon mot*, and found it not infrequently in the *mot de Cambronne*. He was not afraid of vulgarity. But he had Fleet Street's fear of being dull. This is a dangerous attitude to an author who hopes and believes that his writings will live? A reference to "that ass Nietzsche" is not reassuring. One thinks, and Agate thought of Arnold Bennett. Both diarists turned away from the deepest, outstanding problems of their age—doing so because they were 'artists.' The future will show if they were wise.

'Ego 9' is lively entertainment. There is an atmosphere of hedonism combined with hard work; and shrewd blows are struck at our more plainly manifested hypocrisy, at slovenliness, low aesthetic standards, lack of integrity—and at dullness.

Jimmie Agate sat down beside this reviewer, and, reaching for his napkin, said: "I have just asked my solicitor if I am permitted in an article to state that an actress is a bad actress. My solicitor said: 'You cannot even say that Miss ——— is a bad actress.'"

There is the formula. To apply it is not necessarily easy.

M. C.

FIN DE SIÈCLE. A Selection of late 19th Century Literature and Art. Chosen by Nevile Wallis, with a Note on the Period by Holbrook Jackson. Allan Wingate. Price: 10/-

To glance over copies of 'The Yellow Book' is to appreciate the consummate skill with which Nevile Wallis has compiled this anthology from the many sources of the period.

Here are Oscar Wilde's exquisite 'The Selfish Giant' and an extract from 'De Profundis,' Max Beerbohm's delightful 'The Sea-Side in Winter' and Kenneth Grahame's 'The Roman Road,' letters by Whistler and Aubrey Beardsley, an extract from Pater's 'Marius the Epicurean,' a translation from Mallarmé by George Moore, and some of the loveliest poems of Francis Thompson, Ernest Dowson, Lionel Johnson, Robert Bridges and others.

A fine choice has been made of lithographs, wood-cuts, and pen-and-wash drawings. Max Beerbohm, William Rothenstein, Constantin Guys, Toulouse-Lautrec, Beardsley and George du Maurier are among those represented.

Nevile Wallis, in a most agreeably written introduction, says: 'If these pages serve to recapture something of the mood of the *fin de siècle* that would be well.' They do more; this collection of craftsmanship, wit and beauty makes the old tags about the art and literature of the Nineties join the dust of other vulgar errors.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

I have just received your notice of my book, *Arthur Rimbaud*, and I am very grateful to your reviewer for the many kind and flattering things he has said about it. I feel, however, that there are some arguments which I would like to answer. When he says that "the opening chapters are the least impressive," he may be right, but when he adds that they follow "closely Jean-Marie Carré's book" he is misleading. All biographers of Rimbaud—Carré in common with the rest—can only go to the same sources of reference for the facts, sequence of facts, local colour and intimate details of the poet's early life. These sources are: the testimony of the early friends—Delahaye, Pierquin and Izambard—the books of Paterné Berrichon who married his sister and his own letters. All biographers have only this material to draw on and the only latitude allowed to them is the acceptance or rejection of the facts and in their interpretation. Your reviewer has not noticed that, although I go to the same sources of reference as Carré, I do not accept all the facts that he accepts, my interpretation is not always the same and finally, the whole of my first chapter is based on material which he does not seem to have known and which colours the interpretation of the rest of the evidence.

There is another point on which I would like to express disagreement with your reviewer. When he says that "restraint might have been shown in the account of the physical intimacy between Verlaine and Rimbaud" and that I might have conceded to my readers more imagination, he is treading on dangerous and controversial ground. There is a school of serious biographers and critics who believe that no fact in the mosaic of an artist's life can be dismissed as unimportant or unsuitable for consideration, even if it be only part of the background against which the pattern of his personality stands out. Without this background no pattern would be discernible. It would be impossible to write about Rimbaud without discussing his relationship with Verlaine since his greatest works were written during the time of their friendship. If such a relationship—which exercised so great an influence on both the poets concerned—is to be discussed at all it seems to me that the only possible way is simply, dispassionately and objectively, giving the whole of the evidence so that the reader can make up his mind for himself. To rely solely on his imagination would seem to me to be only sentimental and unduly squeamish. I would like to add that although the study of Rimbaud as a poet was the main object of my book—his poetry after all is the most significant aspect of every poet—I was also aiming at a complete biography and thorough study of his entire personality. This needed consideration of every aspect of his nature and every action of his life. Rimbaud was a great poet and his poetry is his chief interest for us today, but he was not solely a poet and poetry occupied only a very small part of his life. He was as well a baffling and intriguing psychological mystery which to be elucidated needs the study of every aspect of his life and nature.

Yours truly,
ENID STARKIE,

41, Saint Giles',
Oxford.

23rd July, 1948.

